

SMITH'S

MAGAZINE

April - 1921

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No. 6

SMITH'S MAGAZINE

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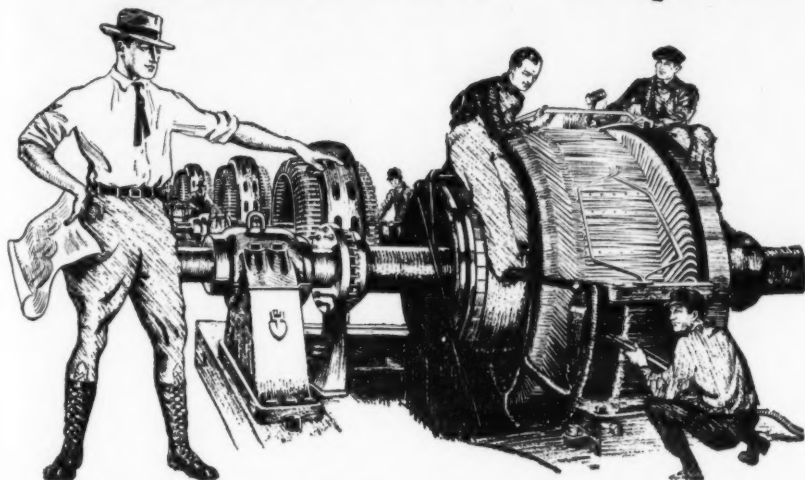
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In fact, I do not understand why any ambitious man should work for small pay when big earnings are within such easy reach. *For what I have done, anyone can do.* There's absolutely no doubt about it—and almost everyone has more advantages than I had to start with.

How I Jumped My Earnings to \$1000 A Month

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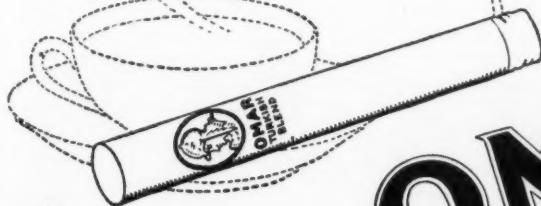
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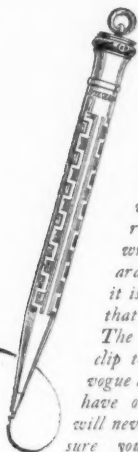


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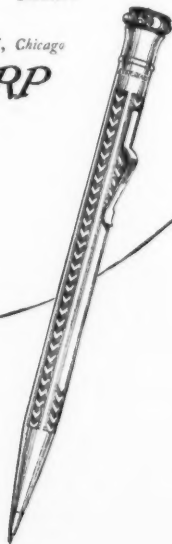


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SMITH'S MAGAZINE

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Undercurrents

The beginning of a new two-part story

By Katharine Haviland Taylor

Author of "Domestic Preferred," "Between Wives," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY EDGAR F. WITTMACK

The work of Katharine Haviland Taylor always glows with interest. Here is her latest, and it is in many ways the biggest, most significant story she has yet written. "Undercurrents" will be completed next month, and Part Two is, by all odds, the best part of the story.

CHAPTER I.

THOSE folk who prate of the transient quality of childhood emotion are wrong. Children register acutely, and the things they feel most deeply make the undercurrents which later sway their lives and the lives of those whom they touch. Swiftly before me glide two instances.

First, I see a man who, without knowing it, is ever being backwashed into a childhood where his father was hurt by the unjust scorn of the mob.

"I hate people," says this man. "Sheep-minded fools who follow any leader. There is no gratitude——"

The fixing of that sentiment is dim, but the sentiment stands boldly forth, its outlines harsh and cold.

Then there is a girl, a girl who says of the man she is to marry:

"I hate his touching me——" She has forgotten his twisting her wrist when she, a tiny tot, held a mica-streaked stone he coveted; she has almost forgotten his tearing up a pic-

ture she drew, her first masterpiece; she only feels the undercurrent whipping her away from him, the man she is to marry, when he would hold her close.

This is a story of strong, opposite-pulling currents. It shows why Derrick McCarthy's soul came to doubt the love of men, and his feeling to respond only to the scientific side of making people well. It shows, too, why Diana Temple shivered under the love of Wilson Lane, and why, before her marriage, she——

But we will start at the beginning, when little Diana Temple sat with her sister Julia and her brother Herbert under the bridal-wreath bush in the side yard. They were playing jacks in a desultory, lazy way. It was a hot day, too hot for much ambition, and Julia and Herbert, who were much older than Diana, were inclined to give all their energies to gossiping.

"Stealing's stealing," remarked Herbert sententiously.



Derrick looked up to see his father, cowed and white, standing silent in the doorway. "My sin," he managed to say, "and not the boy's."

"Hush," warned Julia, with a warning look toward the close-shuttered windows of the next-door house.

"Everybody knows it," answered Herbert, but in a slightly lowered tone.

"Will papa exthpel Derrick because Doctor McCarthy sthole?" asked Diana interestedly.

"Naw, you baby!" Herbert replied scornfully.

Diana's small face expressed relief. She harbored a great admiration for the fourteen-year-old, swaggering Derrick McCarthy, which was in no way returned. When he saluted her at all, it must be confessed that he called her a "brat," and he was always sullen with her because, unknowingly, he was jealous of his father's love of her. However, that morning, when Wilson—the "sis" who lived across the street—when Wilson had twisted her wrist, Derrick had requested him to "leter-alone" or accept the reward of a "swat in the jaw."

Diana looked down at the wrist and smiled. Even "four-an'-a-half, goin'-on-five" is capable of romance!

"Papa does other things besides expelling people," said Julia sharply. "You seem to think that's *all* he does."

Diana, who was the youngest of the motherless family and therefore unprotected against the pecks of her brother and sister, accepted the correction meekly.

"You know he's working over teachers' reports to-day," Herbert put in. "Think he's going to stop and expel Derrick afore school's begun? I tell *you*, a principal's got more to do than *that*!"

Diana remained silent. Her meekness quelled further protest, and when the older children next spoke, it was to go on with fascinating suppositions about the McCarthy neighbors.

"Do you suppose *she* made him?" asked Julia in a lowered voice.

"I dunno; I guess maybe," replied Herbert.

"Suppose he'll have to go to jail?" Julia questioned further.

"I guess. Hen Simpson got six months for robbing the poor box of St. Mary's, and there wasn't so much in it neither."

"What'll they do for money to buy stuff with?" asked Julia.

Herbert shook his head.

"Don't ask *me*," he responded largely. "I guess Derrick'll have to work. He won't be able to be a specialist and doctor people's heads like he says he will, *then*!" There was a faint triumph in Herbert's tone; Derrick's firm intention and his swagger over it had often irritated.

"Maybe they'll go to live with Mrs. McCarthy's brother," suggested Julia.

"That ain't likely," said Herbert, who was chewing on the root-bleached end of a blade of grass. "It ain't likely. He's one of the biggest lawyers in Bridgetown, and I guess *he* wouldn't want any one around whose father had gone and stole from a poor girl whose father left her money to Doctor McCarthy to invest for her, would he?"

"Maybe not," admitted Julia, who was used to Herbert's circumlocutions. "I suppose," she went on slowly, "*she* wanted a silk dress, and kept at *him* and at *him*."

"I s'pose," responded Herbert. "Bet she's raisin' Cain *now*!" He looked toward the other house and nodded sagely.

"Like to hear her," admitted Julia. "You know how she *can* go on! Yesterday I heard somebody say she was 'real sweet;' down at the meat market it was. 'Well,' I thought, 'if you'd hear her like *we* do and hear her beat Derrick!' But she hasn't done that lately, has she?" Julia's tone could not cover her love of the gruesome. She had enjoyed shivering under the lash of the whip Mrs. McCarthy had so often used, enjoyed shuddering when she heard the gasps which had come from a boy who would not cry.

"No," answered Herbert, "not lately. Bet *he's* glad."

But he was not, for young as Derrick McCarthy was, he had reached the age when he preferred the sharp quickness of physical pain to the gusts of hysteria which left within his mind the darkest of imaginings. For days he had

been kept in close contact with his neurotic, soured mother, who, under reflected disgrace, was close grazing insanity.

As the children in the next yard talked of him, Derrick, sitting opposite his lowering mother, heard of the things which might come to him, to his father, and to her. And slowly, as he heard, the color of his soul was changed.

"What did I say to him years ago?" demanded Agnes McCarthy. "I said, 'John McCarthy, these people don't love you. They only come to you because you'll doctor them for nothing.' And look, not a soul in his office for two days now, except wandering old Danny. I said, 'Make your living and let the poor take care of themselves.' But he knew it all!" She bent her head, and glowered at her son. Her gaze, which was sifted through her heavy eyebrows, held a strangely eerie quality. Derrick shifted. She saw this, smiled, and went on speaking, her voice higher, her words coming more quickly, always sharply. Once Derrick closed his eyes and thought of the metallic crack of icicles; it was like that, the cruel, cutting coldness of icicles.

"If he'd put to it," Derrick heard, "he could have attended the best, but he"—the strange hard laugh bubbled, died—"but he said 'The poor need me.' *The poor!* With me wearing my old black silk year after year, *scrimping, saving, scrubbing, working.* Haven't I worked and slaved?"

Derrick did not deny it. He knew that his mother, a dirt fanatic, had looked for dirt so long that she could see nothing but dirt, that wind in the autumn trees meant nothing more to her than the possibility of in-creeping dust, and that spring was no more to her than the pulling up of carpets and the renewed search for something to clean, something to scour, something to fume and fret about.

"He said," Derrick heard, "that the

first time he 'borrowed'"—her scorn was so deep that she shook from it—"was to help a girl from town, so that she might hide from the world the result of her sin."

She went on in a less veiled and chaste manner. Derrick understood it all. He had heard the words she used around the livery stable, where he smoked cigarettes when he could get away from home.

"And because of that *fine* start, your father may go behind bars! You hear me? *Bars!* While you and I may starve, unless your uncle Lucius will take us in. The son of a jailbird, *you!*" Derrick looked up to see his father, cowed and white, standing silent in the doorway.

"My sin" he managed to say, "and not the boy's—"

"The sins of the fathers," reminded Agnes McCarthy, with one of her strange laughs, and she was rewarded by seeing her husband grow even more white than he had been before she spoke.

Doctor McCarthy turned to the stair door and Derrick heard the sound of his feet upon the wooden steps. He knew his father would be muttering, "*One thousand—one thousand—*" the astounding total which had been taken from the twenty thousand left in his trust.

The amount had seemed so little and so easy to repay during the week when there had been no money and no food and Derrick had said, "Oh, I'm hungry!" and old Dan Clavering had come with the story of his daughter's ruin and his prayer for help, and Agnes McCarthy had beat Derrick until John McCarthy said, "If you'll leave off the beating of the boy, I'll somehow get you the new dress you want so bad."

An investment, which promised miraculous return, failed; that avenue of escape was closed. Then came the girl's uncle with his questions about how her



"There are so many roads a man may take," said John McCarthy, quite steadily. "I have taken the wrong one, but I will be always thinkin' of my fine son who is going to travel the right one with his head high."

money had been placed, and so was the gray drama of John McCarthy's life unfolded.

After Judge Carrow's call had ended, Derrick went to call his father to supper.

"Supper's on," he announced from the doorway of the dingy office, which always smelled of iodine and the unwashed flesh of the mill patients. "You'd better come."

Doctor McCarthy, whose head lay on his outstretched arms upon the worn old desk, sat up slowly, blinking.

"I'll be coming soon," he answered, after he moistened his lips.

"She wants you to," said Derrick. "The stuff'll get cold and you know she don't like that."

His father stood up wearily.

"I'll come," he answered.

In silence they went toward the low-ceilinged dining room, and in silence they sat down. After John McCarthy had said his grace—the most devout are those who have the least—Agnes McCarthy spoke.

"Well," she said, "what did Judge Carrow think?"

Her husband laughed strangely, harshly.

"What every one else will," he answered, after his bitter outburst. "They will all think that I am a thief."

It was a windy night a week or so later when Derrick was awakened from his first sleep by his father, who, after putting a candle down on the washstand, sat on the edge of his son's bed.

"I'll be driving out in the country a way," he said, "and I wanted to see you before I went."

Derrick looked up, blinked, and, for the first time in many days, smiled.

"You feel better, don't you, dad?" he asked sleepily. "You *look* so much better!" He put a hand out, touched his father's arm.

"I'm feeling better," his father answered.

Derrick sat up; the effect of his recent sleep began to slip from him, and he voiced a plan which he had thought of deeply and long.

"Dad," he said, "I was thinking maybe you could go away from here. Go somewhere where it would be all right."

"I was thinking that, too," answered John McCarthy as he put out an arm to draw Derrick close. "I was thinking that, too. It's a cold night," he offered in a moment, "and I think it would be fine to sit like this for a bit. We're both men, but it's cold and, if no one sees, do we care?"

"I don't care," answered Derrick, his voice a little gruff because he was embarrassed. In a moment he snuggled close, for a drop of water had fallen upon his cheek and after it rolled down to his lips he found that it was salt.

"Now there are so many roads," said John McCarthy quite steadily, so steadily that Derrick wondered about the salt moisture he had felt, "so many

roads a man may take, and it's good that this is so. I have taken the wrong one, but I will always be thinkin' of my fine son who is going to travel the right one with his head high."

"With you?"

"No, a man must go alone, Derrick. The road to fame is narrow."

"Dad——"

"Son?"

"Could I go with you to-night?"

"No, not to-night."

"I would like to."

"No, not to-night."

Derrick felt the tightening of arms and submitted to them, for after all no one saw, and the weeks had been cruelly cold. After a moment he spoke.

"Dad," he whispered.

"Yes?"

"Dad, that little Temple kid—you liked her, but you like me best? I—I sorta wondered."

"You are *my boy*. There is nothing so dear to me as you."

"I sorta wondered," answered Derrick, and none too steadily. He found his own tears starting and he clung to his father, who grew strong under the heat of the nervous grip he felt. "I sorta wondered," he repeated; "it—it would 'a been *fierce* if you hadn't liked me best."

His voice broke entirely at the end of his sentence. John McCarthy drew and held him close. His hands moved across his son's head, touched his cheek. In the silence which reigned they were closer than they had ever been, and restraints were so lowered that when the man at length spoke he dared to say, "I love you, boy. Love you—*my son*——" He felt the closer cuddling of the youngster, heard his half whispered:

"Dad——"

"Son?"

"The candlelight's awful pretty, isn't it? Soft and nice. I guess I'll never

forget this, your feeling so much better and it's being pretty and everything."

"And you'll remember that I cared for you? *Always* remember that?"

Derrick shifted his position until he could look up at his father.

"I know that," he said wonderingly; "you're good to me. All the time you show that you like me. Why should you say 'remember?'"

"I don't know, I don't know——"

Again there was a silence, while both of them looked at the flickering candle. A draft made the curtain flutter, the flame waver. Somewhere, outside in the dark, star-free night, a dog howled, then a wagon rattled down the street; and the quiet which followed seemed deep, intense. When John McCarthy spoke it seemed as if the night's rest had gripped his spirit.

"I'll be gettin' on, son," he said under his breath.

"Aw right, dad."

"It's quite a trip I take to-night, a fine one; you remember that. You will remember that?"

"Yes."

"Now for a joke, and because we're alone, suppose you say you love me. Could you do that?"

Derrick grew conscious, tried to speak, failed; but his father's waiting, the sag of his shoulders, gave him strength to break his masculine love covering.

"I love you," he managed to mutter, and then suddenly he sobbed. "These weeks," he explained, "have been so awful, dad, with people treating you so. But I'll stay with you, and when they hate you they can hate me, too. They can do that, dad!"

"The sins of the fathers——"

"What?"

"Nothing. I was thinking of something that is not worth the saying."

The big clock down in the business section of the small town boomed twelve

deep strokes. John McCarthy stood up. His shoulders were squared; he smiled.

"God bless you, son," he said quite steadily.

"Good-by, dad."

They kissed. At the door John McCarthy paused. He looked back, smiling, and then, without a word, went on. Derrick heard him fumbling his way down the stairs, for he had forgotten his candle, which still stood on the washstand. Then came an interval of quiet, after which the sound of Molly's hoofs and the creak of the old buggy broke the night's calm.

Derrick lay staring at the candle for a long time, and then he slipped into sleep, happily smiling, for he felt that if people began to call on his father again his father would be happy.

"He'll be all right," he asserted, "if he's helpin' some one."

When he awoke, the candle had burned low, and tallow lay in huge blobs on the cold surface of marble upon which it stood. He smiled even more widely as he woke, for he had dreamed that his father was driving between fields of daisies and that about Molly's ears were daisy chains.

Then again he slipped into sleep, this time one which was made fathomless by the lack of plumbing dreams, and when he awoke it was day.

His mother stood at the foot of his bed, looking on him unsmilingly. Because he was still in the half grip of slumber only his deepest realities clung. They made him say, "Dad——" sleepily and without reason.

"There is no use of your calling for John McCarthy," said his mother. "You may as well get used to doing without him, for he is going behind bars. I knew it yesterday. *My husband, your father, a jailbird!*"

Derrick, who had scrambled up to sit on the edge of the bed, looked out of the window which was near. Suddenly the cold horror which his mother's



The sound of Molly's hoofs and the creak of the buggy broke the night's calm.

words had put upon him faded and a triumph leaped. He laughed from pure relief, and faced her bravely.

"He isn't," he said surely. "He's gone somewhere else. He started last night. He came to say good-by to me. It's all right—all right! There's Molly and the buggy."

But the doctor's old carriage was empty.

CHAPTER II.

When Diana Temple was nineteen, Wilson Lane decided that he would marry her; and, as he made his decision, he reflected comfortably that he had always got what he wanted. When he had been a child, he managed it by holding his breath, and, as he went on, he made his conquests by means which were quite as unfair and equally effective—and always unknown to Diana. However, she did know that his allegiance never failed and that he helped her over a way which was often rough.

He sympathized with her loneliness after her brother Herbert married, he soothed her outraged sense of romance when Julia married a much older man,

whose two sons were close to Diana in years, he offered consolation when cakes fell and when frocks failed to reflect their pattern pictures. The one thing he did not help her with was her ambition to paint, a little-girl ambition which had behind it an undeniable justification. He was afraid of her talent and of the doors to which it might lead her, and so he stifled her inclination toward this very genuine expression of herself whenever he could. Rival suitors did not trouble him for more than a moment, but he was clever enough to realize the danger which may lie, within a young, strong, goal devotion, and that left him doubtful and miserable. He felt that he had an ally in Mr. Temple's uncertain health and in Herbert's young, growing family, which entirely ate up his small income.

"Your father should have a rest," he would say as he studied Diana. "If I could get him up the creek! Perhaps some day you'll feel like playing hostess there?"

The flush which intensified her loneliness as dawn does early spring, the absolute fright which displayed itself

in her eyes on such occasions, did nothing to dam the tide; rather they swelled it. Once it made him break out with a rough-voiced: "*God, child! How I want you!*"

"Slowly," he thought after that outbreak as he walked toward an office upon the door of which was written "*Wilson Lane, Law.*" "Slowly!" He moistened his lips. He loved the teasing quality of her withdrawal. Half consciously he saw her spent and exhausted after the chase, himself the captor. Diana was as lovely as the gooddness for whom she had been named.

"Slowly," Wilson thought again as he opened the door of his office. "Slowly, and through her pity."

He thought of the failing health of her father, the hideous pains which gripped Stephen Temple, and smiled. Diana was devotedly attached to her father, would do anything for him. "My money——" mused Wilson. He was suddenly smug over his financial successes, over the fact that he knew enough to mortgage such a property as old Miss Hetty West's. That Diana would disapprove of that made him frown. He did not mind the disapproval, but he imagined that it might echo in her withdrawal after the capture had been accomplished.

"None of that," he decided so firmly that he spoke half aloud; "she'll have to learn to trust my judgment."

He was very sure then, but during the course of the five following years he began to back his sureness with bluster. Suddenly he felt the bluster begin to have its effect. The constant drip upon the stone was wearing its groove. Diana was less sure about saying she never could marry Wilson. Sometimes "No" faded to give place to a weak-voiced "I think it would be foolish."

"Yes?" he commented one Sunday afternoon, after her thus admitting that it might be. "Yes? And why?" He

leaned close to cover her restlessly moving hands with his. She permitted this, looking at him with a hopeless light in her eyes.

"You know that your father won't be able to keep on working much longer," said Wilson; "you know he shouldn't be working now."

"Oh, I know!" she answered heavily. "I don't think of much else."

"Then why not marry me and give him the rest he needs?"

She tried to explain why she could not, and failed. Wilson looked at her, frowning. Suddenly he gave a small, unmirthful laugh as he said:

"Will you *tell* me why you had to be as pretty as you are?"

"What has that to do with this?" she asked.

"To be frank, the devil of a lot. I wouldn't be here, if you didn't look as you do. You've kept me dancing attendance for five years, you've made me suffer, and haven't cared——"

"Wilson, you know that isn't so."

"And I, like a fool, stay around. It's going to stop, that's all. I'll give you only a little more time in which to decide. I only ask you to remember your father. Herbert can't give you much financial assistance, can he?"

Wilson smiled in a superior way after this question, smiled largely, pityingly. People who did not make money were failures to Wilson; that was the only measure of success he was capable of sensing.

"After about two weeks of hazing, you'd be glad to do as I liked," he added.

"That sounds enticing."

"I wouldn't beat you, but I could bring you 'round. I'd love you into submission. I'd——" His voice broke, and because enough intense words were not, he ended with a shake of his head and an "I'll show you, young woman! *Some day I'll show you.*"

She didn't respond. The scratch of

a match broke the silence, and then angular waves of smoke from his cigar began to float in the partially darkened room.

Wilson, who had turned, studied Diana. She wore a soft, old lawn which was cut low, and the exquisite lines of her throat stood out boldly. The heat had made little curls cling to the back of her neck; and cooking a Sunday dinner, which Herbert and Viola and their two little girls shared, had left heavy marks beneath her eyes. There had been a good many dishes to wash in a kitchen made fiendishly hot by the running of the big stove.

"Prettier," thought Wilson as he analyzed her, "than she ever was. *Prettier all the time.*" Again he covered her hands. The look of her white throat, the swell of her bosom under the soft old frock made his pulses and his patience leap. "Worth humoring," he decided as he studied her.

"You know Herbert has nothing," Diana replied, after long silence, in a voice that was low. Because her gaze was fixed upon a torn corner of the worn rug, she missed his expression.

"I'd do everything to make it easy for you both," promised Wilson. She turned her hand in his, captured and pressed his fingers. "*Why*," he whispered, "*why* you keep me waiting—waiting when I—*God*, Diana!"

Bravely she met all the furious passion which was written on his face.

"I'm so sorry," she said. "Oh, dear, if I knew *what to do!*"

"Have I ever failed you?"

"Hundreds of times."

He was angry, but he did not move his hands because flesh and spirit were quite divorced for him.

"Will you be good enough to explain?" he asked coldly.

She began, her voice shaking a little.

"I'm a fool," she had once admitted to the cloud-touching, paint-daubing Viola; "but sometimes he frightens me.

He knows he does; I am sure of it, and he tries to. It's his voice and—well, I guess I can't explain; but he does frighten me."

Viola hadn't understood, and no one else ever had a chance to try. Diana was not of the kind who prattle of proposals nor of what men say.

"In time you'll forget all these silly little doubts that are making you afraid," he went on largely, after she had stopped speaking, and then with a change of tone: "By the way, I have a bungalow up the river. Took it for a loan last year. I realized it was a good move and—I have it. Nice up there for your father, and you wouldn't have to make as much fuss as you do in town when Julia visits you here. Her friends wouldn't be dropping in for every meal. I shall always be willing to have you entertain your family, want it. To my dear mother I owe that love of showing hospitality." He paused and looked away. The aloneness which his mother's death laid upon him he made into a capital, a working capital.

Diana pressed his hand.

"It's so lonely over there now," he went on. "That empty house hurts me. You could redeem it, but no one else."

Diana moved nervously.

"I'm so sorry," she murmured.

"Sorry for what?"

"That you're lonely."

"If you are really sorry, you will change it."

"Oh, Wilson!" she said despairingly.

He put an arm around her shoulders, tilted her face until he looked directly down at the hopelessness of her deep blue eyes and was somewhat amused at their expression.

"Enjoy tragedy, don't we?" he asked, tightening his arm a little. She shook her head. "However, little girl, I am about to pronounce an ultimatum. One week, and then it's yes or no. I ask you to remember your father because



His hot "For Heaven's sake, why did you tell me *here*?" was answered by her cool
"I wanted to talk."

I care for him and cannot bear to think of his going without the comforts he should have, understand that?"

"Yes," she answered, after a deep-drawn breath.

"I want you to realize that I will make a good husband and that my more mature development makes me take a firm stand with you. I know you be-

long to me, that all your exquisiteness was planned for me——"

"Why?" she asked bluntly.

"I have lived a moral life and am deserving of what your beautiful loveliness will give me." When his voice, which had grown silky, faded, Diana was flushed.

"Sometimes," she stated, "I think that

the 'so-called 'bad' people are a good deal more pure in heart than the very good ones. Sometimes I'm sure that the *thought* evil is worse than that which is done."

"You don't know what you're talking of, and as for thinking evil—whatever that may mean—what leads you to think that my actions do not mirror my mind?"

"Everything," she answered. "You're evasive, Wilson."

For once the appeal of her flesh faded under the sudden rising of his anger. His arm dropped from her shoulders, his chin set, he blurted out:

"Sometimes I think I will go, and—*stay!*"

Getting up, he strode to and fro, head bent, arms folded.

"Every man loves the body of the woman for whom he cares," he justified hotly. "Was that what led you to insult me?"

"No, not exactly, although you do make me feel as if I were entirely made up of skin, dimples, and pretty hair. I know that a woman of my type doesn't need it, but I'd like to be permitted a little mind, Wilson." She smiled at this, Wilson's anger having taken so dramatic a form that the affair was turning ridiculous. "You never allow me to think," she continued; "half the time don't hear what I say. How would you like it if, when you said, 'Diana, did you hear about how I won the Blithers case?' I replied with, 'God, Wilson, the *soft sheen* of your skin!' You simply can't forget it for a moment."

Such a rage as had led him to bite other children when he was young, or, when with elders, hold his breath, gripped him now. He glared at the for-once-brave Diana and then turned to make a stiff exit. His vicious slamming of the front door rather marred the cold dignity he had tried to maintain, and Diana peeked between the

slats of a Venetian blind and watched his progress across the street, which held a knee action like the grand march of "Babes in Toyland."

Diana's friend, Isabel Crane, who had long adored Wilson, came prancing along as he neared his door. Wilson stopped to talk to her, laughing overloudly, paying great court. His weather eye, cast toward the Temple house, explained the reason for his interest.

Diana smiled and went out to the dining room, where her father was reading the book section of a Sunday paper.

"Wilson gone?" he asked without looking up.

"Yes."

"I thought I heard the door slam."

"I thought I did, too," she answered mischievously. Picking up a sheet of the widely strewn paper, she began to inspect the fashions. She hummed as she turned the big pages, for she was feeling extremely light of heart. It had been a real satisfaction to make Wilson furiously angry.

She thought of his progress across the street, and laughed aloud.

"What is it?" asked her father, who had looked up and was smiling from sympathy.

"Wilson's knees," she explained. "They're so funny when he's mad. Look at that silly little hat, father. I think I would look nice in one like that. Only I'd wear it with a tilt to the starboard. And wouldn't the gossips talk! 'Big veils will allow expression for all types;' not mine, I haven't any veil. Viola and Herbert had a good time, don't you think so?"

"Indeed, yes; nice rest for Viola. Everybody needs a rest. I wish we could get away this summer."

Diana laid down the paper, for fashions no longer absorbed.

"It would be nice," she said dully. "You'd like it—lots?"

"I've been thinking a good deal about water," he admitted. "I used to fish, but—we'll have a good summer here."

Diana stood up.

"Going off to lie down," she said, "if you don't mind, dear."

She waved to him from the doorway, but the light which had been on her face was gone. The problem to be answered within a week confronted her, and she cowered under a hint of its solution.

"Thinking a good deal about the water," she whispered as she made her way up the long, winding stairs. "Thinking about the water." The window of her room, which always gave her loveliness in treetops and gray-roofed houses, beckoned now. Scudding clouds and moving leaves showed that the air was briskening. She stood looking out, her head resting against the casement.

"Oh, mother," she whispered without knowing that she spoke aloud, "if you were here—if you were here; I need you so!"

CHAPTER III.

Wilson received Diana's acceptance characteristically; joy was almost eclipsed by his gloatings over winning his way.

"It took time," he said with a little swaggering move of his shoulders. "but *trust Wilson Lane!*" A triumphant laugh followed this, and into Diana's eyes crept a look of pain, a look which was becoming chronic. They were motoring on the evening when she surrendered, and she chose the moment of disclosure deliberately. His hot "For Heaven's sake, why did you tell me *here?*" was answered by her cool "I wanted to talk." With a jerk he turned out for one of the many cars speeding on the highway and muttered something of a side road.

"Please," she entreated, "for once—listen."

"Well, go ahead," he answered irritably; "but if you want to quarrel, don't begin. I warn you I want something else to-night." He drove with one hand, the other closed over hers. For a space they were silent. She knew that his touching her was weakening her chance to reach his mind, but pity leaped to make her gentle. For he did care; quite how she fortunately did not fathom.

"For a long time," she began, "I think I haven't understood you—never myself."

"You're dead right!"

"I think I never got over fairy tales. I expected love to be a wonderfully glittering, glorious, rose-pink thing; but people are only human after all, and so it can't quite be that, can it?" She was pleading a case to her own rising sense of loss and disappointment. He did not know this, but wistfulness made her gently modulated voice even more appealing than it was usually, and Wilson answered:

"You won't be disappointed. I'll teach you——"

He looked at her, eyes glazed, breath coming fast. He was not thinking of her, of reassuring, helping her, but of the teaching.

"Please watch the road," she begged. "I get nervous otherwise——"

"I can manage this car——"

"I did you an injustice," she went on without heeding his remark, "for father said that he used to love the way mother looked. I asked him whether he did, and he told me how her hair used to curl at the back."

This, quite out of Wilson's depth, brought forth his conversation filler which was a "Hum!"

"I didn't understand," Diana confessed. "Now I do. Father believes in you, Wilson. He told me that he would be glad to see me married to you."

"He ought to be."

Diana felt a sense of flatness steal over her. She wondered what she had been trying to say. She felt as if her soul were speaking in a language which even she couldn't comprehend, and so, naturally, Wilson was at loss! She shifted and turned until she could study his profile, and she wondered as she did so why she was afraid. She had always known him. He had been kind, and there was no one else. All possibilities for living the life of pictures which she had planned, were gone. There was the rising of a strange, heavy, dead feeling within. Wilson was good, as every one said, and needed her, and her father wanted her to marry him. Why was she feeling as she did?

His face, coldly set, mirroring in its stiff muscles his feeling of superiority, consciousness of lonely perfection, did not reassure; a trifle long of nose, very thin of lips, chill gray eyes which greened under the heat of anger, all these she saw. He revealed himself through a tie tied too correctly; a handkerchief's edge which matched his neckwear peeping from his cuff, and coat shoulders which were without a wrinkle.

"How long does it take you to dress?" asked Diana. She did not consider the strangeness of her question, did not know that she should have been inarticulate to everything but his kiss.

"Beastly long time," he answered. "Take about twenty baths a day this weather, and clean clothes after each. Should have a man. Loathe putting in the studs."

Wilson had driven up a side road and, at the crest of a hill, stopped his car. After applying brakes he turned.

"I've got you now," he whispered as his arms closed around her, "got you—where I want you—"

She felt his lips on hers, the hunger of them in no way subdued, all the heat of his passion loosed.

She broke away from him almost crying.

"Some one might pass," she gasped. "Oh, Wilson, please, please—"

Heavy-eyed, flushed, he drew her close again, kissed her, muttered of her hair, the satin smoothness of her skin, her softness.

"Probably it's getting used to it," she thought. "Julia says that men and women are different. No doubt I will learn." But nothing within her answered and she quieted to endure stolidly, not to love.

"Some one might come," she said, after a few minutes. "I wouldn't like that, Wilson."

"Suppose they did?" he answered, his voice unsteady, breaking. "Suppose they did? To-morrow—the whole town will know—you're going to—marry me. Don't you think they'll know I'll—kiss you? That I——" He stopped, again bent his head; then he loosed the brakes and they started on.

Clothes helped Diana and the things people did for her. Her sister Julia, in spite of being selfish and demanding, helped with money if not with work. Her trips downtown with her old friends usually resulted in a package tossed at Diana with the accompaniment of "Here, baby, perhaps you can use that."

Sometimes the bundle held a piece of silk underwear, very faint pink instead of the brighter hue Julia liked, this in deference to Diana's preference for white. Sometimes it held a few yards of soft lawn or satin for a chemise, sometimes a bit of lace, or the endless ribbons which went in everything.

Diana would flush with pleasure.

"You shouldn't, Julia; but isn't it lovely?" Julia's gifts were somewhat prompted by the admiration of her friends, friends who said, "You should see the things Julia Martin's buying for Diana!" But, since few motives are unmixed and the result was good, it did not matter.



Wilson came to stand behind her and she felt his quickening breath on the back of her neck.

"I want you, I want you, I want you!" he muttered through set teeth.

Mattie Fox almost lived in the house; she came down to meals with the front of her alpaca waist bristling with pins. Patterns littered the front bedroom, where the sewing was going on; the whir of an old sewing machine filled the house; skirt lengths and waist lines were discussed endlessly; men and the ways of managing them thrown in between discussions by Julia.

"Let him think he is having his way, baby," she said as she ran a ribbon around the top of a sleeveless night-dress. "They all like to *think* they have their way."

Diana laughed.

"And if he's mean, just cry," continued Julia; "it works."

"So the man who prattled of 'Tears, idle tears' lied?" questioned Diana, who

had slipped from her morning frock and petticoat and now stood with shoulders and arms uncovered.

"*Lied?*" said Julia. "He was single! I know that!"

"About three tear-soaked handkerchiefs and it's done?"

Julia grew prim. Her lapses into self-honesties were rare and she always grew frightened and dodged back into sophistries.

"They just don't understand a woman's fineness," she explained stickily. "You can't blame them; they're so different. But if you cry, they know something's wrong. Is this enough ribbon for you, Di? You want a big bow, don't you? My goodness, you have a beautiful neck! You'd be wonderful in something cut really low, but I don't suppose you'd dare wear one in this town."

Her gaze, which had been fixed upon her younger sister's arms and shoulders, traveled up, then down. What she saw made her smile from admiration. It was an unconscious tribute she could not deny.

"Positively," she said, "you're the prettiest girl I ever saw!"

"Wilson wouldn't marry me, if I weren't pretty," said Diana, her mouth sinking into a sulky slant. "I know that well enough."

Julia was troubled. It seemed to her that Diana was dangerously restless, and the thought of her pulling out of the affair at the last moment upset Julia's ideas of propriety. Wilson was "all right" and had money. Diana's attitude was both trying and childish. She tried to soothe her.

"My dear," she said lightly, "remember how I looked when I stepped off? Of course I never touched you, I know that well enough; but Frank raved about me, and he still loves me, and I weigh one hundred and eighty if I weigh an ounce. So you see——"

"I suppose I am silly. You always cheer me, Julia."

"Perfectly natural for you to be upset, baby. Every one is. Now where is that bobbin? But those little questions and upsets fade after a few months, and you realize how glorious a good man's love may be—that fool sold me a short three yards!—and how life will open—open like a rose."

The simile, Julia's hunched-up position on the bed, the combination of poesy and irritation, and some one's else happy reaching of the crest, cheered Diana.

"Julia," she said, "you're a darling!" She kissed her sister, and then laughed. "What an idiot I am!" she went on. "But how do people have the courage to marry twice? *Once* is scaring me blue."

"Possibly they get used to it," replied Julia, and then, in a fumbled voice which sifted through two pins and a blue celluloid bobbin: "Turn the water on for me, will you, baby? I think I have time to bathe before I start out, especially if you'll get my white rajah out of the wardrobe trunk, will you, dear? You want Diana, Mattie? She'll be over in a minute. I've asked her to lay out my clothes, I'm in *such* a hurry. The time just *slips* away!"

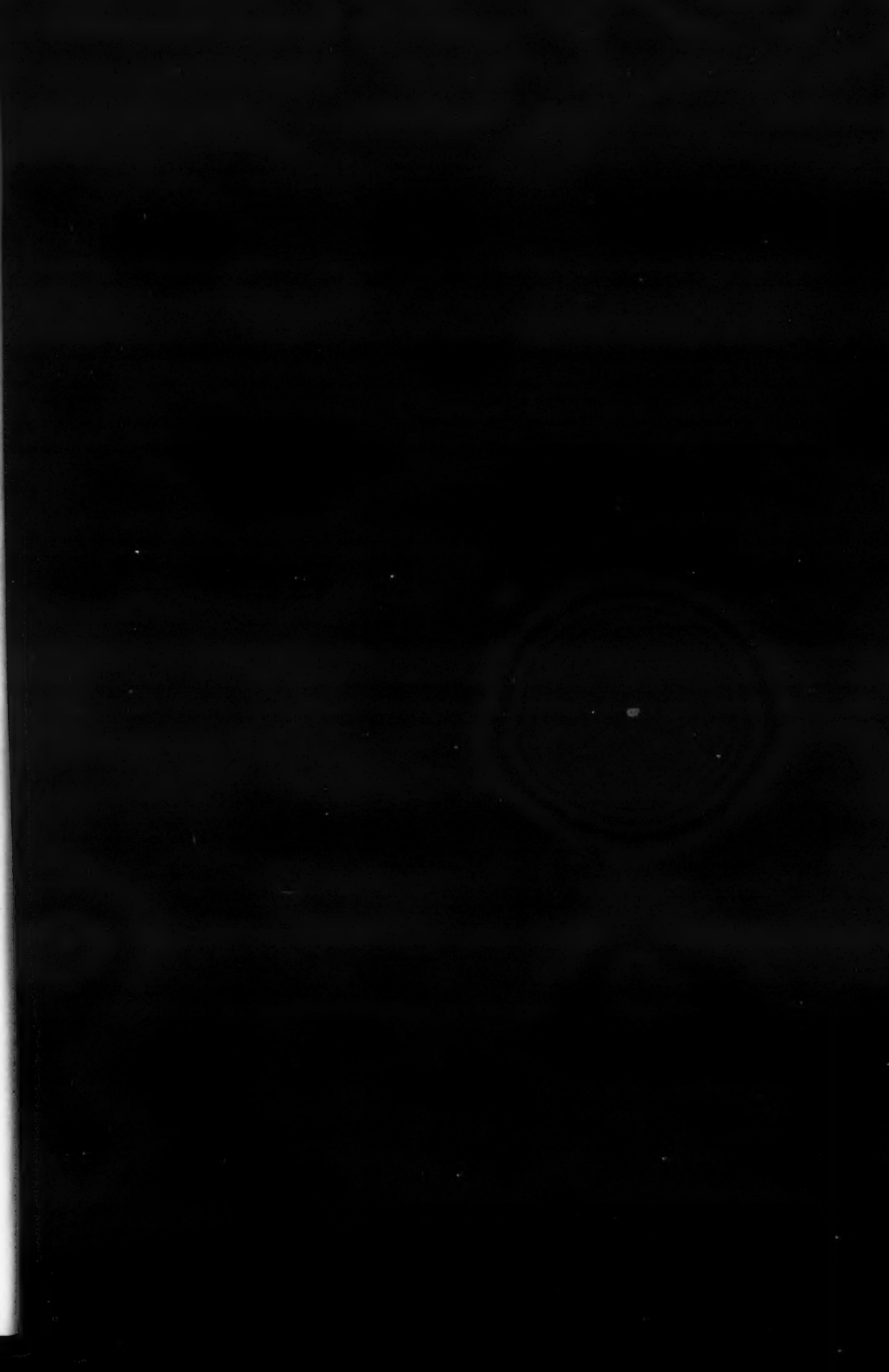
CHAPTER IV.

"How do you feel?" asked Viola Swope Temple. It was the morning of Diana's wedding day, a gray, uncertain one which threatened showers.

Diana, who firmly believed in the reducing power of repression, and who, for the sake of others, often said that she was well when she was not, now responded with a flat:

"Like a rag!"

"Tired, I suppose," said Viola dreamily. She looked a caricature of a Pre-Raphaelite canvas. A string of enormous beads circled her long neck; her





hair was parted and drooped over her eyes, looking like ribbon-caught window curtains, and the back reminded one of the Western wind-rolled sagebrush balls.

"I should think she might have washed it," thought Diana resentfully. Her feet, which were protesting against all the hours of standing they had endured, allowed for no be-glad shellacking of her relatives.

"What are you going to wear this evening?" asked Diana, who was thinking of the six-o'clock wedding.

"My blue smock. I wear little else, you know. I feel that it answers my inner soul. I wish, Diana, that you could pose for me as you are, perhaps before a jar of roses, looking up"—Viola illustrated—"one hand raised, a smile just hinting behind your eyes. I would call it, 'Her Wedding Morn.' It would only take me an hour or so to catch the spirit and it may go. That is the worst of genius; it is so transient. We could do it here, and I'd send Dawn home for my paints—"

"I haven't time, Viola. I'm sorry, but really I haven't. I don't suppose I'll even have a chance to sit down again."

"I always believe in taking time for anything that is vital and letting the rest go, but no matter," answered Viola in a long-suffering way. Diana had known this; Herbert's consumption of soda-mint tablets on all occasions proved it.

Herbert wandered in at that moment, looking a little yellow, as he always did in the morning. He was one of the harmless individuals who, without meaning to, always make unpleasant announcements, the happy tone he employed adding irritatingly to his part in such affairs.

"Well, well!" he said as he nearsightedly peered through the window out at the side lawn and the walk which ran around to the kitchen door. "Well,

well, here's Henry Lippy with Mrs. Hotchkiss' century plant! And Mrs. Hotchkiss, *good morning*, Mrs. Hotchkiss—"

"She can't hear you, the window's down," snapped Diana.

Herbert looked inquiring.

"No," he agreed, after he had fumbled around in his waistcoat pocket for something which, on finding, he put in his mouth, "no, but I think the face mirrors a pleasant, cheery greeting!"

"I hope mine doesn't mirror what I feel just now," muttered Diana as she hurried toward the kitchen.

"Nervous," said Viola.

"She seems so. She seems so. Here come the palms. I suppose that both of the front doors will have to be opened, don't you, Viola?"

Viola arose to languish across the room and to look out of the window.

"I suppose so," she agreed.

"Well," said Herbert brightly, "I can do *that*! I *like* to be of use."

"There's that old palm that Mrs. McKinney walked into at Abby Hughes' funeral," commented Viola. "I know it by the broken side. Mr. Merkle tried to fix it with toothpicks and wire, but it withered. But we can stand it against the wall."

"It was too dark," said Herbert, who was referring to Abby Hughes' funeral.

"Too dark?" echoed Viola in her rapid way.

"Remember," continued Herbert, "how poor old Mrs. Marberry cried over the grand piano?"

"She thought it was the coffin," explained Viola.

"Surely, surely. But I felt it to be sad and that the tears were quite as beautiful as though they had dropped upon the face of the dead. I remember how some people giggled. But I recalled how I had groped around in that room until my eyes accommodated and I felt no mirth."

"I thought the way she stood, look-

ing down at the piano and mopping her eyes, beautiful," said Viola. "I thought it would make an exquisite picture, but it was too dark."

"Yes, too dark."

"They're all off now," Viola announced, after she had looked out of the window toward the flat wagon and palms.

"So they are," responded Herbert. "I suppose I'll have to open both doors?"

"I suppose so."

Viola heard him lope off toward the front door, his tugging at the rusted bolts of the half of the door which was usually closed, his final conquering of them.

"Come in, gentlemen!" he called gayly. "Come in!"

"You'd better lie down," said Julia. "We'll attend to things. I really think you'd better——"

"If I could be spared, I imagine it would be a good idea," answered Diana.

"You're not faint, or anything?"

"No, I didn't sleep well last night. If I can slip off for a moment I'm sure I'll feel all right."

"Well, if you don't there's rouge in my bureau under my handkerchiefs—Corinne will get at it unless I hide it—and you'd better use that. You don't want to look pasty."

"No."

"What shall I do about that century plant?" asked Julia.

"Put it by the desk."

"Wilson won't like that, will he?" Julia questioned, uncertainty in her tone.

"No, he'll hate it. But I'm not going to hurt that old woman; that's all there is about it. It isn't anything vital—I mean the way things look isn't vital—and she offered it because she thinks it's the most wonderful thing in town." Diana began to ascend the stairs; three steps up, she paused, hand on the ban-

ister, half turning. "I hate the palms and the flowers and the crowd, and I had them for him. I guess he can spare Mrs. Hotchkiss a hurt because of me. If he raises any question tell him I won't marry him unless I am permitted to clasp that century plant to my bosom!" She laughed after this, but as a laugh it was not a great success.

"Well," said Julia lingeringly. Diana went up a few more steps slowly, swaying. Her many trips of the long stairs, many weeks of standing, had left her feet so aching that they would not take ways steadily.

"Look here, baby," said Julia. Diana again halted. This time she turned to slip down on the steps.

"What is it?" she asked.

"You look about fourteen sitting there huddled up like that," said Julia, who had learned to manage her own house with flattery as well as tears. "You know, you don't have to kotow to that old woman. What she thinks doesn't matter."

"That's just it," Diana answered, after an interval which had been filled with her level gaze meeting, probing her sister's. "That's just it. Few people have to be kind to her, so they aren't. And I think it's mean. Oh, I know," she hurried on, as Julia threatened to raise her voice, "I know that she's meddlesome and makes lots of trouble and that her character isn't admirable; but she lay awake thinking of giving me the use of that miserable, devilish plant—I hope I never see one again, everybody's been so mean to me about it—and she'll talk of it having decorated my wedding until she dies."

"I didn't know every one had been mean to you. I think that's unreasonable. When I think of how I've tried to help you——"

"I only meant about the plant." Diana's voice weakened after this. "I know I'm bad-tempered," she con-

fessed; Wilson told me I was last night, but I can't seem to help it."

She twisted her hands in an unhappy, nervous, tired way after her words and stared tragically ahead.

"Now, now," soothed Julia, who was alarmed both by her appearance and new sharpness. "Don't get excited, Di! There's no occasion for it. I'm going to have Mrs. Meigs make you an egg-nog and Corinne will bring it up. Get out of your clothes and lay a wet towel on your forehead, then try to slip off, and when you wake you'll feel like a new person. Here comes a delivery boy. Something else, I suppose. I think people are treating you very well. Run on, baby."

The high, thin peal of an old-fashioned pull bell rang through the house. Julia opened the door. Diana went on upstairs.

CHAPTER V.

When she reached the third floor she went into her room, closed and locked her door, then for a moment stood, back against it. A packed trunk was under the window which had once been a breeder of dreams. A new black suit case of very smart line and gold clasps lay open on a dress box. This, the gift of Julia's husband, Frank Martin, had been marked at Julia's order with "D. T. L." The letters stood out, seemed to dance with heels of fire on Diana's consciousness.

A faint pink negligee lay on top of the many little jars and brushes which belonged to the new case. Gay, beribboned, and rosebudded mules stood close, ready to go in. Underwear and all the many little things a woman takes with her upon a trip were covered by a crêpe-de-Chine nightgown, which billowed on the other side of the opened case. Diana looked and closed her eyes. All the horror which she had tried to ignore, to dream a lie, surged.

"I can't," she whispered. "I can't!"

She began to shake cruelly, her palms grew damp.

"Julia says every girl——" she thought. Then, "No, no, no!"

Without stopping to undress she threw herself down on her bed, hid her face in the pillow, to fight again the battle she had fought a million times.

Her "But is it fair to Wilson?" had been answered by Wilson. Always amused at doubts, Wilson had responded to this one with, "If you marry me that's all that's necessary. I'll do enough loving for two." The reply had not helped her. Her father's belief in Wilson, his acknowledgment that he would like to see her settled, sprang up anew. Julia's faith in the quieting effect of time followed.

"I am a fool!" she thought as she turned over. "A fool. It's a wonder Wilson's stood me. He has been patient."

There was a tap on her door and she struggled up to hurry across the room and unlock it. Her small niece Corinne, born when Diana was eighteen, appeared with a tray. Although she was a badly spoiled little piece, she was attractive, and at the moment made very good by the grown-up dignity which carrying spillables conferred.

"None of it went over," Corinne remarked piously. Diana, who saw the traces of some one's sip on the edge of the glass, smiled.

"Did any go in?" she asked. Corinne professed bafflement, and then, sitting down on the edge of the bed, watched her aunt as she drank and nibbled a cracker.

"You're to drink it all," she ordered. "Mother said so. Mother said to aunt Viola that you were fiendishly nervous. She said she never saw such a fly-off-the-handle, but she said when she considered Wilson's chin she didn't worry. She said he'd tame you. How will he tame you, aunt Diana?"

Diana shook the cracker crumbs from her lap, set down the glass, leaned forward to take her little niece's hands in hers.

"With love," she said, after a laugh, "with *love*! Isn't that funny?"

"Yes," agreed Corinne, "I suppose it is."

She slipped from the bed, picked up the empty glass, went hurrying downstairs, for the doorbell had rung again and packages were fascinating things.

"Mother," she said, after the expressman had dumped a huge box on the porch and remarked that the company "didn't require no hauling it in the house," "mother, aunt Diana liked the eggnog."

"Well, that's good. Herbert, bring a hammer!"

"Mother——"

"What is it, dear?" This came a little impatiently.

"Aunt Diana said that Wilson would tame her with love. And she laughed, but, mother, when she laughed her eyes were *way up* filled with tears. Isn't that funny, mother?"

"Oh, for Heaven's sake! Did you hear that, Viola? Diana's crying. Probably look a sight by to-night. Whatever's the matter with her, I *don't* see. Get out of the way, Chicky, can't you see that uncle Herbert has to stand there to take out the nails? He adores her and has a good income and she says that she supposes she loves him as much as she ever will anybody. Don't tell me it's another punch bowl! What people are *thinking* of when they send a girl in a little town like this a punch bowl, and especially when there's no reason for punch any more! Did you hurt your hand, Herbert?"

Herbert, who was sucking a blood-dripping finger, muttered a "Not much," and smiled wanly. His two little girls came babbling out of the house, the crumbs which circled their mouths telling a tale of vanishing ginger cookies.

"Papa's hurt his hand," they caroled. "Oh, Mrs. Meigs, papa pounded his hand."

"Thank Heaven, a salad bowl," said Julia, to whose skirt clung short wisps of excelsior. "She *can* use that. Where's the card? Why, it must be. Perhaps you pulled it out with the paper, Herbert. Look, will you?"

Still sucking one finger, he pawed aimlessly with his unmaimed hand.

"Oh, for Heaven's sake!" ejaculated Julia, who was beginning to feel the nervous tension of the day. "Let me get there, you'll *never* find it that way. It *must* be here."

After Corinne disappeared, Diana took off her clothes, wrapped herself in an old, faded kimono, and again settled on the bed. Here, hand under her cheek, she lay, looking at the suit case.

She had always loved pretty things, but the delicacy of the georgette negligee made faint appeal. There was something safe and warning about the old, stretched, shabby garment she wore. She looked at the frayed sleeve upon which was a big blotch of shoe blacking. She recalled the day that the tall, black bottle had overturned, her irritation, and the suddenly exploded, "I don't suppose it will ever come out and I'll have to wear it for a thousand years!"

At least she hadn't had to wear it for a thousand years. That day Molly Nelson hadn't come and she had had to undertake the Friday cleaning for the house. She had been tired from it, discouraged, had allowed herself to feel overworked, abused. "What a fool I was," welled up in her mind, "what a fool!"

She decided that if she had her life to live over she could do much better, for housekeeping was so comparatively easy and so little worth fussing over when compared to other things.

Turning, she stared up at the ceiling.

A leaking roof had made a big yellow stain on this. The paper was soiled from age. Once the room had been pretty in a pink-and-white, young-girl way. It had held an atmosphere of waiting, waiting for change, formation; but circumstances had allowed for no change save that of age and wear. The dress box, which had once been very gay in its cover of pink and white chintz, was now grayed, faded; the white furniture dulled and scratched. The rag rug, once rose, had slipped, through many washings, into a dull, undefinable hue. But worst, most bitter of all changes in that once young, dear-pathetic room, was the fact that a window that had held so many sights for so many pictures no longer beckoned or lured, and that life had taken away its visioning power.

Diana fumbled under her pillow, found her watch. A glance at it told her that she must soon get up, must begin to get ready.

"Ten minutes more," she thought, lying back. Little chaotic reflections about her family flew through her mind; Julia's goodness, Herbert's patience. Her father's pleasure in the bungalow by the creek made her smile; his clumsy masculine efforts to make her way easy almost made the tears start anew.

"A man's pretty much of a fool," he had said. "I know Wilson's all right; if I didn't, you wouldn't have a chance to marry him. But I know girls get upset at the idea of marrying, and that your mother could have helped you. I can't. I wish I could. I *wish* I could——"

He had been almost too tender with her on several occasions, breaking her restraint. His hand on her arm, his arm around her waist; the softening of his voice when he called her "little Di," or "baby." His constant offers to do things for her, and his plannings, projections of all the happinesses she would

find, had been meant to smooth, but they had not. They had made her jealous of her responses; reserved, in order to guard the possibility of a breakdown; staccato, almost mean, with her affection.

"I'll go down to see him after I'm dressed," she decided. "I think I can keep up, not be silly——" Again she looked at her watch. This time heeding its warning by getting up. She wound her hair around her head, stuck in a few pins, started downstairs.

Her father's door was closed and the transom darkened, so she realized that his nap was still going on. She closed the door of the bathroom before starting to run the water, and then, after finding towels and the soap she wanted, went to hunt Julia's rouge. A mirror reflected her risen color, and she slipped it back.

She found Julia in her room after she had again made her way up to the third floor, a Julia who was nervous and fussy, who as she said, "Mercy, Di, you *are* late, it's after five," knocked over a vase of hatpins, which tangled in a hair net.

"I think there's plenty of time; all my things are out."

"Well, they *need* to be. I'm so glad you aren't to be married in a suit, after all. So glad we persuaded you not to be. Here, dear, you're right. That white underwear is attractive, wonderful on you, but it has to be washed so carefully or it yellows. Mrs. Kirksley sent you a dozen of the most gorgeous service plates, gold band, but not ordinary-looking, with a heavy design under the band, dull, cream china. Another rainbow coffee service came, so ordinary, I think; and a Sheffield pitcher that is a beauty from old Mr. Lindsay; he said you'd always smiled at him—he delivered it himself—and the most hideous umbrella rack you ever saw from the Billy Crawfords, which you'll have to have around, as they're



She moved cautiously, stood where she was partially shielded and yet could watch.

so influential and will call the first thing and *expect* to see it. Going to do your hair high?"

"Have to with this veil. It sets down over my forehead, you know, and my hair sticks out through the top."

"Yes, that's true. I think I ought to go down. I have to dress Corinne, too. Excited? You never saw anything *like* it. Do you need my help?"

"No."

"Well, then I *will* go down. Viola will probably be back in a few moments—she's gone home to dress—shall I send her up?"

"Dear soul, no!"

Julia laughed, and relief spread over her face. Diana's color was good, her tone natural.

"I can hardly wait to see you," she

said as she began to make her way toward the door. "You'll be a perfect bride. Saw Wilson just a moment ago. At an upper window looking over. I imagine he's nervous."

"I really don't think he minds it as much as I do. I suppose pleading cases has inured him to the limelight. Go along, Julia. It is getting late and you hate to hurry."

Alone Diana went on with her dressing. A white satin and lace petticoat which looked like the broken crest of a wave, absurdly small cream satin pumps, then the gown, straight, almost undorned, which made her too lovely,

a small string of seed pearls which had belonged to her mother and the veil. She stood looking at herself for several moments, warmed and cheered by the picture of the glass.

For a second Wilson's hot face came between her and her lovely self, his face as it had looked the night before, when, on leaving her at eleven, he had drawn her close to say:

"To-morrow night at this time, in a stateroom, *alone*, going farther and farther away—*together*."

She gripped her hands until the ring of a thousand lights cut deep.

"Dear God," she appealed, "help me. I'm such a fool. I'm so *afraid*—make it—all right—help me!"

But all trace of emotion was gone when five minutes later she tapped on

her father's door. She opened it to say:

"Dear, I'm dressed. I want you to see me, for I expect both Wilson and you to say that I am the prettiest bride you've ever seen. I've loved you so much, dear, I haven't been a very good daughter, but I am going to do my best to be a very good wife. The way you think of mother makes me want that."

He sat up in bed, blinking. "You look like some glorious princess," he said, "some glorious, happy princess in a fairy tale."

She turned before him.

"And you're going off with your prince at nine to-night," he went on. "God bless you!"

CHAPTER VI.

After she left her father she went to the front room, the one in which Mattie Fox had made all her new frocks and her underthings. Here she very carefully gathered up her veil and sat down on the edge of the bed.

The room looked strange in its new order. She missed the heaped materials, the pins on the rug; Mattie, who, with tape measure hanging around her neck, frowned behind her second, forehead-anchored, long-sighted glasses while she asked whether a skirt was too long or too short, or whether a sleeve was set in too far forward.

The chaos had somewhat numbed her perception of the coming event, but the night before it had come upon her in full force. It left her sick and shaking, so far took her from her real self and her usual restraint that she went down to drag Julia from sleep to ask whether every girl was nervous, frightened, horribly uncertain over taking the step into marriage.

"Of course, baby," Julia answered sleepily; "every one is." She sat up in bed, blinked as her eyes accommodated to the light. "Every one," she repeated more firmly as she came back to the

waking half of life, "is nervous, unsure. It'll be all right. You've always known Wilson; *we* all have."

Diana nodded.

"These doubts of yours would make him very unhappy," continued Julia.

"I don't want to hurt him," said Diana. "I don't know what I do want. I—I know I'm foolish."

"Very," agreed Julia.

From the adjoining room Corinne stirred, and they quieted.

"Sorry I bothered you," whispered Diana. "I'll go now——" and she left. But before she reached the door Julia's sigh sank into her hearing. They had all been patient, she admitted to herself; she had been and was trying. But she wished that they would not feel themselves to be so patient and could understand her. However, when she couldn't understand herself, how could they?

The hall was dark, and she had swayed once or twice as she went up the stairs. Her nervous pull and overwork were beginning to tell upon her.

Now, fifteen minutes before the hour of her wedding, she knew that the time for doubts was past, that in a short space she would promise to love, to honor, and to obey Wilson.

Strangely an old scene on a bridge came back, a scene in which the principal actor, a boy of nineteen, spoiled the enjoyment of a little girl because he enjoyed spoiling it. She heard him lie about throwing her first picture into the creek; her own loudly shouted "Cheater!" And then she looked up to see the man that this boy had prefaced standing in the doorway.

"Not a spot to wait downstairs," he said. "Stand up."

She did, turning before his appraising gaze.

The expletive that the look of her jerked from him revealed all he thought.

"You *wonderful, beautiful* thing!" he half whispered.

"You mustn't crush my veil," she warned.

He dropped his arms, smiled, took out his very thin watch, looked at it.

"Twelve minutes," he announced, "and then I will be issuing the orders. Rather, I can disregard yours." She felt the heat of his eyes, shrunk.

"Oh," she appealed, "is this right?"

"More hysteria?" he inquired crisply.

She swallowed convulsively, managed to smile.

"No," she answered, "I'm sorry. That—that just came out. I think you look very impressive, Wilson; turn around. Wonderful tailor. You do like my veil?"

"I do."

"I am going to try to be a very good wife," she promised, promised somewhat stridently. He looked down into her eyes, smiled widely.

"You'd better be," he responded, in no way touched by her words which had cloaked a deep and real feeling. She had grown to believe human understandings frail, that she must go on alone; but, in spite of her hard-learned philosophy, his smile hurt.

She wished that he had taken her in his arms, had made her forget her veil and little things such as crushed finery, as he promised in some way, she cared not how, that he would try to make it go with her. But his mind never did her the courtesy to answer her seriousness with seriousness. His moods ruled, hers were things to laugh over, to dismiss, or to scold away. And so he made her flesh, to which he always responded, a divide.

"You think," he asked, "that I've pursued you long enough?" His manner was unpleasant, because the wedding was something of an ordeal to face, and he was unsettled by the prospect. Already Diana was beginning to reap his moods, fittingly, he thought, since she was to be his wife.

She lifted her face, searched his. He

hated her, she realized; hated her will because it had kept them apart so long, hated her power, the fact that she had kept him dancing, the fact that she had not gratefully fallen, before she was stem-free from the tree of youth, into his arms, hated the fact that her retreating made him humbly follow.

Her own failure to make him entirely happy, her own doubts, made her feel small, a failure. Nothing that she had done had been complete, magnificent.

She had wandered to the window as her reflections soared, and through a gap between the heavy green shade and casement watched the people who were making their way to the front door. Wilson came to stand behind her, and she felt his quickening breath on the back of her neck.

"I want you, I want you, I want you!" he muttered through set teeth.

"My veil," she warned as his arms closed around her.

She managed to evade his relentless second kiss, to whisper:

"Some one's coming."

"Damn some one!" he answered, his voice roughened. However, he stood erect and loosed his arms before Herbert entered the room.

"A great crowd," said Herbert, who wore a soiled bandage around one finger, "and Mrs. Hotchkiss is on that chair that is so unsteady, but *all* will be well. Now, Wilson, if you will be good enough to come with me and follow me down the back stairs, we will wait until we hear Miss Simmons play the wedding march and then make our entrance. Did you give me the ring? I declare I've forgotten *which* pocket I put it in. Ah, *here* we are! And, Diana, when you hear Miss Simmons playing the wedding march, if you will start with father—where is father?"

"I don't know. I supposed downstairs."

"No, I don't think he's downstairs."

"Why not look?" demanded Wilson, with a pardonable irritation.

"Capital!" said Herbert with a wide display of his happiest smile. "We'll look. I'll go down, if I can't raise him with a call." He went to the hall and called, "Father!" He returned to say, "No answer, is there? Diana, you might go up to see whether he's sitting in your room, as a person might for sentimental reasons, and forgotten the time, while Wilson—well, Wilson'd better stay *here*."

"The damned fool!" said Wilson after Herbert disappeared.

"I know," answered Diana. "He does seem so sometimes, but he's really dear. And he's my brother."

"I *humbly* beg your pardon."

She looked at his unpleasant face, tried to think of the right and soothing word, gave up.

"I suppose he's nervous," she reflected as she tried to do him some sort of justice.

"It's getting very late," complained Wilson. "I wish your father had been more mindful of the hour. Really very awkward, this delay."

"I'll go look."

"I think you'd better," responded Wilson coldly as he wandered over to stand before a mirror. Here and alone, he settled an already settled tie, carefully touched his hair, moved his chin to see the little spot his razor didn't always catch. In the middle of this scrutiny he heard Diana's call. A shaken, terrified call it was. He answered its direction, stumbled into the room of Stephen Temple, where Diana knelt by a bed.

"He's breathing," she said, without taking her eyes from his face, "breathing, but he won't come awake. Father, *dear!*"

Wilson felt a rising of hideous anger. He drew close, shook the older man, grew frightened, and forgot, for the moment, his annoyance over waiting, a

waiting which had already been too long and was steadily growing longer.

"Call Julia," ordered Diana.

"I will," he answered. Her pallor touched him, made him stoop, and for the first and last time kiss her gently. At the door he turned, but she did not look up. The picture she made crept into his heart to take root there and bloom at strange times: a picture of a remarkably beautiful girl in her bridal attire, kneeling by a bed, unmindful of the crushing of her finery, forgetting everything save love, the sort of love which Wilson Lane could never feel or sense.

CHAPTER VII.

Kaleidoscopic were the following hours for Diana. She never remembered them clearly, could never forget them entirely—a hospital, the smell of a disinfectant, the mention of a state-room, always swinging open for her the door of her memory.

The old doctor who had attended Stephen Temple for so long was summoned; he, in turn, summoned a colleague, and the result of the conference, when reduced to two words, read, "Immediate operation."

"I thought it was anæmia," said the elder of the physicians; "that the blood wasn't reaching the brain. It looked that way, but now——"

"What?" asked Diana, who was still in a white satin gown, but without her veil. "Now—what?"

"Some sort of pressure, brain pressure," answered the younger man. "Doctor Harper's mistake was one any one would make. However, the present condition indicates——" he rambled on, using his longest words, his most impressive manner, for he was very young and Diana was beautiful.

She tried to follow him, sharply brought him out of technicalities, and found from him that New York was the place, that there was a famous

young surgeon there, a brain specialist named Derrick Strong. If he would take the case, Stephen Temple would have every chance that he could have.

"Doubtless you've heard of the 'Strong Fracture Lift?'" said the younger physician. "That is his. He's marvelous, really marvelous. There will be every chance, if he will take the case."

She nodded, turned away.

All the little necessary things which were to be done before the nine o'clock start for New York—in the stateroom which was to have taken her with Wilson, "farther and farther away—together"—crowded in to ease suspense.

She found Herbert sitting on the stairs, weeping loudly, and dispatched him on various errands. She bade him telephone for the extra berths, for the stretcher and ambulance; asked him to bring down Julia's suit case, decided for him that Viola would not go to New York.

"You see," she explained, "some one must care for the children."

"Yes, yes, the children," he echoed, while he hunted through various pockets for his handkerchief.

"And Viola can stay here. Mrs. Meigs will stay, too, to help her."

"Yes," he answered, "Mrs. Meigs could stay——" He began to sob brokenly again, and she put a quieting hand on his arm.

"I need your help, dear," she said. "Julia's gone to pieces entirely." At that moment Julia's voice came to them from the head of the satrs.

"Diana, are you ready?" she called. "Is your suit case packed?"

"It was packed."

Diana turned away and hurried toward the kitchen. Here borrowed plates and tall cream freezers reminded her of an event which seemed as if it had been scheduled for a time years gone by. Mrs. Meigs, whose head was covered by an apron, endeavored to stifle

her sobs as she listened to Diana's orders. After this, Diana returned to the front of the house, which was fragrant with flowers. She found Wilson looking down at a century plant decorated with a huge bow of yellow ribbon.

"Anything I can do?" he asked.

"I think not."

He laughed shortly.

"Fitting," he said, "for this to happen now. The gods are good to you. Eluding me all these years and now—*this*."

"Postponed," she answered dully, wonderingly. She couldn't comprehend anything but the serious illness of her father.

"Certainly," he answered harshly. "I know that, but——" His voice trailed off, before his words were finished, and she, after a fumbling little touch of his arm, disappeared. He moved restlessly to and fro. If Stephen Temple died, as young Fitch seemed to think he would, would Diana keep to her promise? Could he hold her to it?

He increased the pace of his stride, mopped his suddenly moist forehead. He wouldn't lose her! God, he *couldn't*!

Julia, in traveling dress, appeared in the doorway. He hurried toward her, and from the white heat of his doubts spoke.

"Uncertain right along," he said, after a none too coherent preamble; "and now—suppose she reconsiders!"

"She won't!" Julia assured him.

"Diana has always had rigid ideas of honesty. And she's given her promise."

The reminder of Diana's honesty did not soothe his perturbation. And, oddly enough, the scene which had made him much trouble in the days of his first admiration of her came back—her screaming, "Cheat!" when he said he had dropped her picture in the creek accidentally. When she found out about his surprise for her, the house on Hetty West's lot, would she scream "Cheat!" inside? "She must make up her mind

not to meddle in my business," he decided firmly, even while he trembled from what the disclosure might bring, that is, if it were disclosed before marriage. After marriage she would be his, "to do with as he pleased," after marriage, "it would not matter."

If the wedding had not been postponed, all his fears would have been stilled, but now— Again he moved restlessly.

"You're not afraid of this bringing bad luck?" asked Julia, who was pulling a veil down over her reddened eyes. "You're not superstitious?"

"No, it isn't that," he answered as Diana came into the room, dressed and ready for the trip. He put an arm around her, and Julia hurried out, ostensibly to give an order about Corinne's food to the tearful Mrs. Meigs, in reality to give Wilson a chance to part from the girl who was to have been, at that moment, his wife.

He kissed her, forgot her trouble, everything but his want of her. In a moment or two she gently disengaged herself, held him away.

"I don't think of anything but father," she explained. "I'm—I'm sorry——"

The ambulance clanged up to stand in front of the house. Two men got out of it, and Herbert again swung open both the doors. His two small daughters, Dawn and Sara, stood in awed silence. Corinne clung to her mother's skirts. Mrs. Meigs, who peeked around the dining-room door, loosed a terrific sob which Herbert echoed.

Diana wondered how they could cry—how Wilson could want to kiss her, even think of doing it—how any one could do anything but strickenly, blindly hope for her father's recovery.

At that moment Derrick Strong was standing by a window in his rooms. These looked out on the Hudson and down on the Drive.

"Tired?" said a proprietary old negress, who carried in something hot in a glass.

"No," he answered; "just a little more than usually sick of the world."

She stood looking at him.

"Going to the woods to-morrow," he said. "Don't care who needs me. Haven't had a Saturday and Sunday off for weeks."

"Yeh, outdoors," she answered, nodding as she spoke.

"Need it," he confided. "Need it like hell!"

He set his teeth on his lower lip, looked out on the waters upon which rested a smart French cruiser and various smaller, less smart crafts. He didn't see them, for the most successful young surgeon of a great hospital, almost the most successful man of his kind in America, was in the grip of one of his despairs. They came, now and again, deep ones. Sometimes he could not shake them off, and, when they would not disappear, that which made them made him cruel to the needs of men.

He slipped down in a soft, deep chair. The withered old woman switched on lights.

"No!" he said impatiently.

She turned them off again, brought a small table, set it by his chair, and on that the glass she had brought in. After that she disappeared. He sat brooding. He wondered why he worked so hard, why he didn't golf any afternoon he chose, why he didn't go off to his small country house, why, when the few years in which he had worked had given him more than sufficient money for comfort, he kept pushing himself, answering men who forgot, would forget, if a real test came.

He moved uneasily. He saw the one old man who, from forgetfulness, had come to his father's office. He saw his father scorned and made an outcast.

"Bleed you," he thought, "and turn

aside; forget, believe the worst. I'll go off to-morrow night!"

He sat smiling, but unhappy. The decision brought no pleasure, because that which made it tortured and would not rest.

CHAPTER VIII.

To be wrenched from one's firmly made decision is humiliating, and to be moved from it by a feeling which one prefers to regard as nonexistent is a thing that leaves high-leaping irritation. Therefore, Derrick Strong's mood was bad, and his manner echoed it.

"He'll probably die, anyway," he growled the next afternoon shortly before three. "Let Maxwell have the pleasure of seeing him kick off."

"His daughter's just outside," said some one of the office in an undertone.

Derrick Strong felt a surge of something which tangled pity and shame. This died in the rising of his hard belief.

"I wanted to go to the woods," he said very loudly, unnecessarily loudly. "Peach of a day, promises well for to-morrow, and I haven't been free for weeks."

The youngster who arranged appointments and scheduled operations moved uneasily. He had seen Diana. One look at her had made him pull out his little pocket mirror and inspect his mustache, which was, as yet, a negligible quantity. Some women, quite unconsciously, bring out this side of any man.

Doctor Anshuntz, who was the head of a very famous clinic, and enough senior of all the staff to bully them a little, frowned.

"Blay time should be secondary," he asserted; the blur which always lurked in his accent intensified through disapproval.

"Well, in my case, it isn't," replied Derrick Strong. He went on to tell exactly how it outstepped work in his opinion; how much more important his

recreation was to him, how he resented his days inside and the factors which made them. The hurt of old Doctor Anshuntz's cutting in, and the back-down from his principle made him say a little more than he intended to, than even a man who didn't and *wouldn't* care at all for people would have said. Afterward he wondered what he had blurted out, tried to recall each word; failed, supplied what he might have asserted, through the channel of imagination, and so added to his deep, dark misery.

He noticed the fussy moves of the older man, waited sardonically for something which he supposed would be an impertinence. Any suggestion given to him at that moment would have seemed so. His world was wrong.

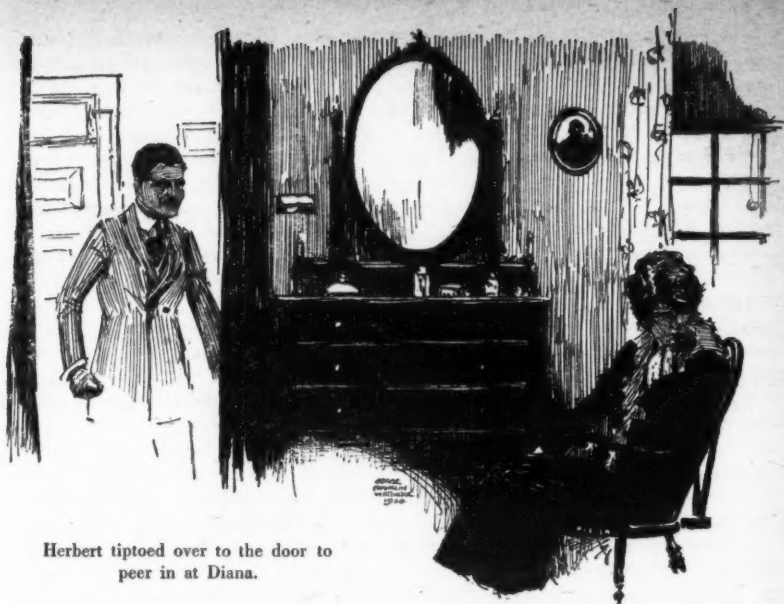
"For a moment you go," ordered Doctor Anshuntz; "for I wish to talk alone to Doctor Strong." The admirer of Diana nodded and disappeared. He found her outside, not five feet away. She stood by a window which looked out on a street where were parked numerous cars, those of the many visiting physicians among them.

"Doctor Strong is erratic," he said after a look at her face and a preparatory cough. "He—ah—does not take interest in the individual, will not, but some think this adds to the strength of his work. You needn't be alarmed. He will do everything as well as it can possibly be done. He is really marvelous."

"I've heard so," she answered dully. Then, after a suddenly caught, deep-drawn breath: "You think he will do it?"

"Oh, yes. Doctor Anshuntz got his consent this noon after the diagnosis had been made and he had talked with you."

For the fraction of a second she closed her eyes. As she opened them again her color, which had receded, came back.



Herbert tiptoed over to the door to peer in at Diana.

"I thank you," she said quite steadily.

The young man made a motion of dissent, and spoke quickly, making some inane remark about hope. He saw that she hadn't absorbed it, and, after an uneasy move or two, turned aside. His worry about what she might hear had evaporated, he judged that suspense was turning her dull, or perhaps she was always that way.

Meanwhile Diana waited and Doctor Anshuntz voiced a request which was, even to his sentimentally tuned heart, a doubtful one.

"He has not been conscious," he asserted, "possibly will not be, you think?"

"How do I know?"

"She asked to see him if he is conscious. There is much, she says, she wishes to say. She was to be married and was irritable, excited. She wished to say she cares greatly for him——"

"A trifle late in the day for that,"

said Derrick Strong. His voice was crisp and it carried to Diana, who was *not* dulled past comprehension.

"Anshuntz," Derrick Strong continued, "you're a damned fool! What do you think would happen if we allowed all the weeping relatives of the ailing to come around blating their requests for forgiveness?"

The older man was silent for a moment. When he spoke it was slowly.

"She is very pretty and young," he asserted, "and she is very sad."

Diana heard the first, Derrick Strong's badinage and his sudden laughter. She walked away, knees trembling, color high. The soil that was to grow hate for Derrick Strong was being tilled, being made ready for the seed.

When she found Julia and Herbert in the waiting room of the Harburg Building, they both surveyed her with relief.

"Your color's so much better, Di," said Julia.

"Yes," agreed Herbert, after he loudly blew his nose, "it is. Your look has *concerned* me."

"Just the same?" asked Diana as she sat down by her sister.

"The same," answered Julia. "Herbert has just been up." They slipped into silence, all of them thinking their various thoughts, curiously differing, yet alike; Diana, of the things she wished she had not done, the little, nerve-made sharpnesses which seemed so cruel in recollection; Julia, of her father's long years of suffering, wondering over their stupidity, why they had not found out about the pressure, of the injury which had come probably of a fall ten years before; Herbert of his father's slight chance and the fee, wondering whether Julia would help with it, and if not, how he, already in debt, could manage.

He wondered, too, whether the school board would let his father have a year of rest without permanently filling his position, and if work would be necessary, if Wilson and Diana married.

He voiced this question, was answered.

"It was one of the reasons for my marrying him," said Diana. Julia looked shocked, Herbert amazed. Silence again settled.

Derrick Strong's reaction was complete. Therefore he was very gay on the following afternoon. The depression which had gripped him the night before had blown away as would a small cloud on a clear, windy day. It made him whistle, tell a young and pretty nurse that her recently acquired bonnet was "a dream," shatter all discipline by making two senior nurses—who should have known better—giggle, and tease a damn out of a repressed surgeon who was renowned for his piety.

Therefore he made a good story out of Doctor Anshuntz's request for Diana Temple's leavetaking—if it proved

to be that—of her father. He reproduced the burr delightfully, and placed the petition entirely upon Diana's personal appeal.

And Diana was in the corridor.

She heard loud laughter from the room where the surgeons washed up before and after their work, and an occasional word; she made the story worse than it was by filling in the gaps, absorbed the seed of hate, felt it take root.

She began to walk to and fro, tried to still her anger, tried to realize that what this young devil or god, whichever he was, said didn't matter; that the life of her father lay within his hands. But the part that the will played in healing, the transfusion from one individual to another of the desire to preserve life, troubled her. If a greater part of the man were opened to influence with the stilling of his active being by anæsthesia, then would her father be helped by the message which would seep through this man's fingers?

She thought of the old country doctors, of how great a part of their curing lay in the soothing of souls as well as in the alleviating of pain.

As she passed beneath the annunciator it whistled, then singsonged the name of the desired surgeon. The little noise made her jump, tightened her already stretched nerves, further tested her heart with high, irregular beatings.

A white-clad figure hurried across the hall, a rubber-tired wagon on which was a stretcher easily slipped from the elevator, went down the narrow way to disappear in the anæsthetizing room. Again rose a burst of laughter from the doctors' quarters. Then, again the elevator halted and she knew.

"How did you get up here?" asked a nurse, who saw her bending above Stephen Temple.

"I—I just came."

"Well, Doctor Strong doesn't like people here, especially young people.

Occasionally older people wait, but you must be very quiet."

"I will be."

"Does Doctor Strong know you're here? There's a little room at the end of the left corridor where they prefer people should wait."

"No, he doesn't know. Please let me stay, *please*."

"You'd better go around the corner before he comes out," said the nurse in an undertone. "He's very particular."

Diana nodded, and turned to the indicated retreat. Then began a new sort of, nerve strain, this time of listening.

After a time the annunciator whistled, this time singing out: "Doctor *Straw-ong*, Doctor *Straw-ong*."

She moved cautiously, stood where she was partially shielded and yet could watch. She saw the swaggering young demigod, the flap of his white apron as he made his way toward the big double doors, his smile as he accosted an older man who came hurrying from the operating room, a man whose apron, even cap and face, were splattered with blood.

"Adenoids, or a wart?" asked Derrick Strong.

"You go to hell!"

Derrick Strong threw back his head and went on laughing, but the man he had met muttered as he made his way to the place where he could wash the blood of the dead from his shaking hands.

"Nineteen," he explained to a group of sympathetic listeners; "engaged, too. Know the people. Makes it the deuce, knowing their folks. Strong's right about some things, but he's hard. Now if this had happened to him——"

"He'd have come out singing 'Let me be your once in a while,'" broke in one of the men who had been listening; "and he'd have forgotten it before he'd gotten along to using the hand lotion. He is hard, but, Lord!" The man who

had spoken shook his head as he finished, admiration that would not be subdued showing itself in a grudging, unwilling fashion.

Outside, Diana waited. Minutes borrowed the cloak of hours, and in them memories of all the human-small things she had done that she wished undone, all the things she had not done that she wished done, leaped to play an agonized game with her spirit.

Passing nurses, surgeons, bodies lying rigid under sheets, made slight impression. She heard one pretty nurse say to another:

"But Mary Pickford is almost *too* sweet. Marguerite Clarke has more pep, and Lila Lee——"

Then somewhere the smart closing of a door and silence.

She never knew how long this lull lasted, but how it was broken she never forgot. All the love-filled healing of the years which followed could not erase the horror of that moment and of what the man of the wonderful fingers kept from her.

CHAPTER IX.

Derrick Strong usually dismissed the day's work after it was finished. He had taught himself to do this and to make it a part of his life's discipline; reflections about failures did not help or strengthen him. But through the rigid walls of his strong will crept questionings made by the echoes of that afternoon.

"Wish I'd *gone* to the woods," he muttered as he looked over a desk and a table in his search for a short-stemmed pipe.

He had eaten a good dinner. He had a new novel which promised satisfaction. It was cool enough to enjoy the comfort of a high-leaping fire, and an admirer had sent him a load of driftwood, which now, aflame, told in high color stories of its many voyages and adventures.

The room in which he sat was built to soothe. The walls were hung with dark-toned, softly folding material. There was much space, and the sense of it so exquisitely captured that never a thought of emptiness protruded. Above a strange old table which had once held the wine bottles of the Fathers of San Raphael was a yellowed Grecian cast. On another wall, an unframed bit of sky and rocks, a part of Amalfi. A few prints were hung in a corner where stood a small grand piano.

Above the mantel was the one dash-ing, insolent piece of color—this, water, a dock, a squat green ship, a maid in a bright red sweater. Derrick Strong did not know, when he bought this, that he was recognizing talent that would one day be well known, far-famed. He only knew that the water looked wet to him, that he could almost feel the salt breeze as he looked at it and smell the pungent, cloying odor of long-soaked wood.

The things in his apartment were not assembled there because some one said they were good, but because he liked them. And the trust that he placed in his likes was justified. The attitude of most people changed to grow more respectful after they had surveyed his belongings and learned that he had chosen them.

Derrick had settled by the fire, pulled on a low light, tried to cage his wandering mind in some one's else thoughts and failed. He laid down his book, face open across his knee, knocked the contents of his pipe into the fire, reloaded it, frowning as he did so. A spluttering match made fresh rising smoke, and in this he seemed to see the man who had died in operation that afternoon; his face—which had seemed vaguely familiar, and the look of it when, during a moment's consciousness, he called, "Diana! Diana!"—called this loudly, imploringly.

There had been a rush at the door. Through set teeth he had blurted:

"Keep the fool out!" Anger over her being allowed in the hall, the tight tension which gripped him as he took the one chance, entirely lowering his restraint, caution, polish.

He had taken the chance and he had lost it. That was a part of his work, but he was sorry that this girl, wife or daughter—from the man's age, he judged daughter—had heard. For, although he did not believe in putting himself out to help people, something deep inside of him, something that John McCarthy had put there, would not allow him to hurt them and to be comfortable.

The book would not hold him; he found no pleasure in looking at the fire of gorgeous hues, for he remembered how he had felt after his father's death—even after his mother's death—so he could not help imagining how the girl who had heard might be feeling.

At length he gave up, leaned forward, rang a bell.

It was answered by the old colored woman, who sidled in, her blinking eyes showing that she had been sitting in the dusk.

"Morton out?" he asked.

"Yes."

"The devil he is! Who told him he could go out?"

"You did," she answered levelly.

"Well, get me the phone."

She nodded, went to a small Italian cabinet, from which she returned with the telephone. This she put on a chair-side table, then moved away, saying:

"That's all," not as if it were a question, but as if it were a statement.

"That's all," he answered. He called and got his number, waited a second, impatiently asked his question. "Office?" he queried. "Derrick Strong speaking. What was the name of the man I had early this afternoon? Two operations; I mean the older one—think he was older—think he was married. Had him last."

"Just a minute——"

"All right."

"Are you there, doctor?"

"Yes."

"Briggs is the name."

"Where from?"

"Here. 2378 Mayburn Avenue, off Telfair."

"Thank you."

He hung up the receiver, pulled himself out of his deep chair to go over to a long table, in the center of which were writing materials, his pens, and check book. He sat down and drew out a sheet of writing paper. His "My dear Mrs. Briggs" ended fluent composing.

"Hell," he muttered, "what can I say?"

But, after an interval, he filled a page, and after he had folded it slipped it within an envelope which he addressed to "Mrs. Diana Briggs." After he sealed the letter he sat looking at it, hating his part in the unknown Diana's agony, irritated with his inability to express what he felt. When he arose he stood the letter on the piano in front of a dragon's-blood vase. Morton, who with Zilpha, ran the place, always posted the letters which stood there. The look of the envelope, which held the best he could do, allowed his will to have its way, allowed him to forget the afternoon and so to read. The letter, without address, slipped to the place of the letters which have no homes.

At the moment of his writing it, a girl, a very pretty girl, was hating him as she had never hated any one before. So intensely did she do this that once, unknowingly, she spoke aloud.

"He didn't have to die," she said, "*he didn't have to die.*"

"What is it?" asked Julia from an adjoining room where she was packing her bag.

"Nothing——"

"If she could cry it would be better," whispered Julia. Her brother nodded.

He tiptoed over to the door to peer in at Diana.

"Her-lips are moving," he said after he returned to Julia's side. "She has that queer expression on her face again." He stopped, blew his nose loudly. "It *upsets* me so!" he complained.

"Wilson will help her."

"Think she'll marry him right away?"

"I hope so. I shall urge it. Strap this, will you, Herbert? Diana, you must get on your hat, we only have a half hour more."

Diana responded, got up, began to get into her outdoor things, her lips moving again, her thoughts framing upon them:

"He didn't care—he didn't care—he wanted to get to the woods!"

Of the fact that her father had wanted her and that she had been denied to him, she dared not think. She knew that if she did, something inside would snap, and that all the torturing pressures would be loosed in one.

She found her mouth dry, and her body trembling. She clung to the bureau to steady herself, closed her eyes.

"I mustn't think, I mustn't think of that *now*," she whispered. "But some day——" She opened her eyes. In the glass she saw reflected the promise that they made. She began to breathe quickly, then she smiled. The smile twisted her lips cruelly, wiped all the beauty from her face. When it faded, she began to put on a veil with hands which were quite steady.

"I'm ready," she said as she joined the others in the next room.

"There is a telegram for you from Wilson," said Herbert. "I opened it. He'll meet us at Williamsburg."

"Oh—Wilson," said Diana vaguely. She had forgotten him.

TO BE CONCLUDED NEXT MONTH.

Adam and I

By Mary Carolyn Davies

TEA in a garden, and you in blue,
Pouring it out as you used to do!
"Cream or lemon? One or three!"
You took my heart when you gave me tea!
A heart for a teacup ringed with green,
A fair exchange as was ever seen!
What a garden's lure is, I do not know;
Adam and I have felt it, though.
And now to-day the pepper trees
Sway again and brush and tease
Your bended neck, as you smile and pour,
And drop three sugar lumps in once more!
Tea in a garden, and you in blue,
But to-day what I've wished so long came true!
"Cream or lemon? One or three!"
You gave me your heart when you gave me tea!



The Walled Garden

By Arthur Wallace Peach

HER heart is like a garden, cool and sweet,
That dreams beside a gray, much-traveled street,
And sends in drifting beauty from its close,
The fountain's music and the scent of rose.

Beyond the gate the feet of pilgrims press
The roads they think will lead to happiness,
With visions of the hills above the town,
Where to the sea the trails go plunging down.

I was of them until I breathed the scent
Of roses in the still, walled garden pent;
Then, giving up the dreams that shining wait
Upon the hills, I turned the garden gate.

And now I hear the weary, restless tread
Of those by longings vain forever led,
Who never know in love's hushed garden lie
The hopes fulfilled, the dreams that never die!

The Prescription

By Arthur Crabb

Author of "The Vision of Sally Long,"
"The Lady in Black," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT A. GRAEF

The delightful story of a young woman who sincerely believed she could never love.

MISS HELEN KASSON was born in Boston's inner circle and, as was to be expected, stayed in it. She did exactly what a great many other girls did: she went to school and to children's parties, to dancing school and to "dancing classes," and came out into society, and for some years, before and after that, was in close touch with Harvard University as represented by its students. After she became a little old for college boys she drifted along, surprised how busy she was and still more surprised how little she accomplished.

Beginning when Helen was twenty-two and continuing until she was twenty-eight, her friends married, one by one, almost without exception. Helen herself thought seriously of marriage and had plenty of perfectly good chances to marry, but none of the men involved quite suited her. Then when she was twenty-eight her health broke down. It was nothing serious, but a complete change was prescribed. Helen and her mother went to Europe for a year or so.

As a child, Helen had not been entirely robust; there was nothing really wrong, but she had to be careful about her diet and not to overtax her strength. As she grew older, she became entirely strong and well. For ten years she led the strenuous life of her kind, mixing



riding, tennis, golf, skating, and walking with late hours, dancing, bridge, and fancy food at all times of the day and night. She stood the strain remarkably well and needed only one or two "complete rests" in the course of the ten years.

The trip to Europe was not successful. Helen came back very much as she left, with no appetite to speak of, unable to sleep more than three or four hours a night, nervous, and generally miserable. Various specialists examined her and found nothing wrong, but they prescribed for her, nevertheless. At the end of a year her condition caused her family much concern. Then, when some one recommended Doctor Hayes' sanitarium in glowing terms, it was investigated with such satisfactory

results that Helen's trunk was packed and off she was sent.

She was thirty years old then. She was tall with broad shoulders and a rangy frame, a little slender, but very graceful. She was an experienced woman of the world, but there was a simplicity, straightforwardness, and sweetness about her which was very charming. Although she was not unusually good-looking, her character was in her face and made it not only very pleasant to look upon, but made her stand out as an especially able, intelligent, dignified, and attractive woman. Her mouth was rather large, but her lips told of her gentleness and amiability, her gray-green eyes were a little cold, her chin very firm, her nose straight and large, yet delicately formed. She had a great deal of very good-looking light hair.

She had never been a raving belle—she had no desire to be—but she could never complain of her popularity. Both men and women liked her greatly, and their regard for her was based on complete respect. She was an entirely superior woman.

She went to the sanitarium for an indefinite period. Doctor Hayes took her in charge for the first month and made much of her. Then gradually he turned her over to the care of one of his assistants, Doctor James Carey, a comparatively young, but very able, specialist in nerves.

She lived by the card and improved rapidly. She ate stated quantities of this and that food, she went to bed and arose at exact hours, she took just so much exercise. They experimented on her with various kinds of food taken in both the conventional way and in the form of powder inserted in tiny cuts in her arm. She was watched over with the utmost care and examined with the greatest minuteness.

She enjoyed it immensely; she became so interested that she discussed

medical matters at great length with Doctor Carey, and did a bit of studying under his direction for her own amusement. He was a very pleasant man, and as he was surrounded by unattractive invalids, it was not surprising that he did not discourage Miss Kasson's interest in his work. This interest meant that he saw much more of her than he would otherwise have done, and he, like other men, liked her immensely.

In due course—four or five months—Helen Kasson was entirely well. The day before she left she said good-by to Doctor Carey.

"I'm glad you're well again, naturally," he said; "but I'm sorry you're going away."

Helen smiled at him approvingly.

"But there are consolations," he went on. "I shall be surprised if you're not back again before long."

"Good heavens!" Helen exclaimed. "Do you mean that there's something really serious the matter with me?"

"No, indeed; no, indeed! You are perfect organically, no insidious disease has you in its grip. Of course there are certain foods which don't agree with you, but that is not important. Nevertheless, I rather expect to see you here again."

"Why? Please tell me."

"You have noticed, I take it," he said, "that the physical condition of many of our patients is the result of their mental state. If we could straighten out their brains, their bodies would take care of themselves."

"Are you suggesting that I am in that class?"

The doctor looked at her casually and shrugged his shoulders.

"I have little doubt that you will go back to Boston and be in perfect health for a month perhaps, perhaps a year. Sooner or later you'll again lose your appetite, and with it the very becoming twenty pounds you've put on. You won't be able to sleep, your nervousness

will return and increase, you will be unhappy and you'll come back here."

Helen laughed.

"Nonsense," she cried; then she added: "What makes you think that?" She had great confidence in Doctor Carey. He frightened her a little.

"Your trouble has always been ninety-nine per cent mental," he said. "You are naturally a vigorous woman physically, you are very active mentally. The life you lead starves you. You nor any one else can combat nature successfully. If I were you, I should get married. If you do, I'm very sure you will forget this place ever existed, you will have no more breakdowns. Otherwise you'll come back."

Helen laughed merrily.

"That's easier said than done," she said.

"That's absurd. Why have you never married?"

Helen shrugged her shoulders.

"I don't know why I haven't," she admitted.

"Don't tell me you've never had the chance." He spoke like a father cautioning his child not to fib.

"No," she said, "that's not the reason."

"Have you had a dozen chances?" he asked.

She smiled at him and thought a moment.

"Not as many as that," she said.

"Half a dozen?"

"Yes, more than that. But what a thing to say!"

"Nine?"

"Yes, if you insist, exactly nine."

"Weren't any of them good men, attractive, well-to-do and all that?"

"Some of them."

"Haven't your friends, your contemporaries, married?"

"Of course; practically all of them."

"And they're well and happy?"

"Yes."

"Can you tell me wherein you differ from them?"

"I've simply never been in love, that's all."

"Why not?"

"How on earth should I know?"

"Can you tell me how an ordinary human physician can do anything for a woman who is so peculiar, so abnormal, so different from other women that she has never fallen in love?"

"Well, can I help it if I was born that way?" Helen said that rather fiercely.

"Of course you can't help it, but my advice to you is to fall in love with some good man just as soon as you can."

"I could never fall in love with a man until I knew he was in love with me."

"Why not, for goodness' sake? That's just a high and mighty attitude you've assumed and it's utterly preposterous. You're human, and human beings fall in love whether they want to or not. Don't you think that you're so afraid of being anything but the very cold, haughty, and—what shall I call it?—modest Miss Kasson that you sometimes lean backward?"

Helen, on the surface at any rate, seemed to think that it was all a great joke.

"All right," she said, smiling. "I'll see if I can hook a man and do you out of a patient."

"Laugh all you like," the doctor said seriously; "but I'm in dead earnest."

"I quite understand, and I promise to obey orders. What more can I do?"

"You can do this: contemplate the millions of normal, everyday people you see about you and discover, if you can, wherein you differ from them, wherein you are superior to them, if you like."

"That doesn't sound terribly complimentary," Helen said.

"It is not meant to be either complimentary or uncomplimentary. You'll



"Can you tell me how an ordinary human physician can do anything for a woman who is so peculiar, so abnormal, so different from other women that she has never fallen in love?"

let me know how things go with you, won't you? You're a very interesting case."

"Of course I will. You've been perfectly wonderful to me. I'm very much more obliged than I can tell you. Good-by."

Helen went back to Boston and was in perfect health and perfectly happy for a month. There was plenty to do and her mind was fully engaged. She had no time or occasion to think of her health. Then one night the dinner

which was set before her was not attractive; it consisted of things for which she did not especially care, and she ate very little. She drank an extra demitasse and did not go to sleep until she had been in bed a long time.

The next day was void of attraction; she was listless and bored. She begged off from a luncheon, and read a novel which did not entertain her. She was not hungry. The next day was better and the one after that, but the fourth day brought a strong sensation of depression which lasted through the next

day and ended in panic. She recalled vividly Doctor Carey's statement that she would be in perfect health for a month or a year and then the old trouble would come back. Her belief that it had come back frightened her and, as she lay wide awake in bed in the small hours of the night, the prescription which he had given her flashed across her mind.

She had not thought of it seriously; it had been the result of idle banter. Marriage was doubtless a very practical and desirable thing, but how could a woman marry when she had never known a man who gave her a thrill, a man from whom she could derive a lasting and complete happiness and comfort?

She realized that she was bored with life, that the future was a dull, monotonous, dreary span of time. She realized that she didn't have enough to do, but there must be other ways of finding work than by getting married. But what other ways were there? She confessed that charity work was impossible, she had tried it with poor results for the objects of it and worse for herself. She had tried art in various forms and had proved that she had no great talent and no great ambition; the incentive to earn money was lacking.

"Can it be that my only salvation is to get married and have children?" she thought. It seemed to be a confession of great weakness and she resented the idea; but, as day by day her old symptoms increased and she became more and more forlorn, she gradually submitted to the inevitable. It was marriage or nothing. Finally she wrote a letter to Doctor Carey, admitting that he had diagnosed her case correctly and that the trouble was with her mind. She ended her letter by saying:

And so I'm going out this minute and find a man to marry. Naturally I expect you to consider this a professional secret and not breathe a word of it to a soul. It would

be too embarrassing for words if the fact leaked out.

The doctor answered on one side of a sheet of note paper:

I'm not surprised, of course. I quite expected it. If you don't find your man, remember that you can always come back here.

Helen felt that the die was cast, that she was in midstream and powerless to resist the current bearing her to the whirlpools of wedded bliss. The thought made her laugh, yet she knew that she wanted to be married, that it was the only safe haven for her. She had heard of girls who were crazy to be married and she wondered whether their state of mind was anything like hers. She thought that such a condition was usually brought about by unpleasant home conditions or poverty, and she had no such excuse.

Somehow the idea of actually going out and corraling a husband amused her mightily, raised her spirits. She slept well and was hungry.

"The prescription is working before the dose is taken," she thought with a smile.

She went at the task of finding a husband in a rather indefinite fashion; she began studying men in great detail, comparing the good qualities of one with those of another; she attempted to discover what characteristics made her like certain men and what made her dislike certain others; she studied husbands to discover wherein their charm lay for their wives, why their wives had married them; she studied wives and compared them with herself to learn in what way they were differently constituted from her. It was all most engrossing, a brand-new game, and it made life much brighter.

She wrote Doctor Carey all about it, and her letter stretched itself out to unbelievable lengths; she told him, too, that her health was wonderful and that he was probably the greatest diagnos-

tician extant. He answered in a few lines, thanking her for her letter which he said was a distinct contribution to science and a most delightful epistle. He then warned her not to consider her cure complete; the game she was playing would soon lose interest for her and she would have a relapse. She must take every drop of the prescription or return to the sanitarium.

The game she was playing did lose its interest before long, because she was playing it in the abstract and not in the concrete. She had examined as systematically as she could the hearts and minds of a lot of men and, although the research was interesting, it led nowhere. It was the same old story; she could not imagine marrying any of the men with whom she came in contact.

Then she had a bright idea. How about the men she didn't see? "The men she didn't see" were the nine men who had, at one time or another, proposed marriage to her. She made a mental list of them. It occurred to her that to hook a man who had proposed to her was not nearly so unmaidenly as setting traps for one who had not. Five of her nine suitors were married and therefore negligible, a sixth had always been negligible.

This left three, and she analyzed each of them carefully and thoroughly, employing for that purpose not only all her innate cleverness, but also the fund of knowledge she had accumulated in her recent investigations.

All three of the men were unquestionably eligible. They were gentlemen of good family, law abiding, able, intelligent, and pleasant. She eliminated one because he was too small, and that left two. It was hard to decide between them.

Eventually she made her choice, and in doing it she was influenced largely by one male quality which she admired above all others and which her research

work had shown her to be a great aid to domestic bliss. That quality was consideration for others, and that quality won for John Ames Willard the honor of being the subject of Miss Kasson's great experiment, or rather the honor of collaborating with Miss Kasson in her experiment.

The thought of making advances, even one advance, to John Ames Willard after a complete separation of five years was not pleasant. She could hardly explain to him the reasons for her advance, and it was entirely possible that in five years his opinion of her had changed very materially. She would like to be sure that he would be friendly at least before she sent him a note or called him on the telephone. Neither the note nor the telephone, especially the telephone, seemed exactly dignified, and Helen was wrestling with the proper method advance when fate stepped in and smoothed her way. She met John Ames Willard face to face in a crowded subway.

He was at least friendly, and it required no great courage to ask him to call. He said that he would be delighted to call, and Helen suggested that he telephone first to be sure that she would be at home. Later she wondered just how she had worded the invitation and what her manner had been when she did it. Had she been calm and casual, or had the great adventure lighted up her eyes and softened her voice a little? She was not sure, but she suspected that there was a trace of the latter.

John Ames Willard came to call promptly, and the experiment was under way. Could she, by putting her mind on it, by concentrating her every energy, by employing all her will power and ingenuity, make herself love a man, to be exact, love John Ames Willard? One thing was certain, she would not fail for lack of effort.

Willard himself was a charming man, one whom any girl might be proud to

possess. He had loved Helen Kasson with a deeper and more abiding passion than any of her other suitors, and he had not desisted in his pursuit until he was convinced that it was hopeless. He came back to her after five years torn with conflicting emotions. Had she changed her mind, or was her invitation a formal thing given for politeness' sake and under the impression that old wounds had completely healed? He came back to her with hope and fear in his heart.

Helen had decided that to be very nice to him would be the most likely way of accomplishing the results she desired; she would unbend a little, be gracious and pleasant, try to please him; she would drop, so far as she was able, the coldness, the lack of sentiment, the attitude of complete independence which were certainly part of her.

Willard, wallowing in a slough of doubt and uncertainty, determined to feel his way carefully and not to lose control of himself as he had done before. If the wound had healed, the scar was still there and sometimes the spot ached hellishly. He realized almost at once that Helen had changed remarkably. Her haughty reserve had vanished, and in its place was a gentle, sweet good-fellowship. Her figurative hand, which in the old days had been held out to keep him away from her, seemed to be held toward him now to be grasped in amity. She seemed anxious to please, rather than most difficult to please, as she had been in the old days.

Within a month Willard was more in love with her than he had ever been, and Helen knew it and she knew that she did not love him. She had meant to do no harm, but she had done great harm; she had brought about a tragedy and her guilt was great. She had thought only of herself in selecting Willard for her great experiment, and she realized, too, that in bygone years she

had thought only of herself and never of the men she had refused. Her conscience had been clear. She had done her best to send them away before they came to an actual proposal; she had been successful in doing that in one or two other cases, but not with any of the nine.

Now her conscience was not clear. She had let Willard come back, and she had been "nice" to him. She had given him substantial reasons for believing that she had changed her mind. It had required a little acting and a little insincerity on her part to seem always glad to see him, to enjoy being with him, and to accept, with some show of enthusiasm, his invitations to lunch, to the theater, and to drive.

She had studied herself and had studied him. He left her cold and unenthusiastic so far as her heart was concerned, although her brain appreciated his great attractions and fine character.

But John Ames Willard loved her and she knew that she could not prevent his proposing to her. She knew that she could not marry him; it would be utterly impossible for her to do that. She had played her selfish game; it had done her no good and would cause a good man great unhappiness. She knew that the fault was entirely hers; Doctor Carey had put the idea into her head and she tried to put some of the blame on him, but she could not convince herself that he deserved it. But she wrote him the whole story from beginning to end. She ended by saying:

See what you've gotten me into! You're so very wise, tell me what I can do to save my self-respect and undo the wrong I've done an innocent man.

The doctor's reply was prompt and, as always, short:

There is only one way I know of saving your self-respect and undoing the wrong you have done an innocent man—marry him. Whether the cure is worse for both of you

than the disease I, of course, cannot tell. Let me know how it works out. I am greatly interested. I rather expect to see you here before very long.

His letter annoyed Helen a little. John Ames Willard proposed, and Helen refused him.

"I'm sorry," she said, "it's my fault. I haven't been square."

Willard was courageous.

"Precedent was against me," he said; "but, somehow, I did hope that you had—had changed."

"I have changed. I might as well confess the whole thing. I want to be married, I——"

"You should be. That goes without saying," he interrupted. "Life as it is, as it has been, for you must be a dreary thing. You have no responsibilities, you have planned no worthy future; you need them both."

"I know that perfectly well. I've tried my best to love you. My meeting you in the subway did not make any difference. I'd been trying to decide how I could get you to come and see me; you would have heard from me in some way or other, if I hadn't met you. Can you forgive me?"

"There is nothing to forgive. You have tried your best to work things out for both of us and failed. You're not to blame. Haven't you ever loved any man?"

"Never. I suppose I'm queer; there must be something very wrong with me."

"Have you tried falling in love with any other men besides me?" Willard, when he had asked the question, was ashamed of it, but he knew at once that Helen was not offended.

"No," she said; "you are the only man I have tried to love. I chose you in cold blood because you are the man I would like best to love."

"At least that is—consolation," he said. "Don't you think that if you kept on trying you might love me some day?"

Helen shook her head. "No, I'm afraid not. I'm sure, absolutely sure." And then she added: "I'm very sorry."

She was very miserable when he was gone. She did not want him to come back, she hoped that he would never come back, she hoped that he would forget her, she hoped that she had not done him lasting harm. She was melancholy and depressed; she lay in bed a long time, her eyes open and her spirit low, calling herself a fool and worse things than a fool. The next morning, after not more than three hours' sleep, she rose and faced an empty world. The bottom had dropped out of everything, there was nothing left to live for.

Three days made things worse. Not only did all her old troubles come rushing back, but she was far more nervous than she had ever been; her hands trembled, she dropped one thing after another, she went hot and cold by turns, she hid herself in her room and cried and cried. She thought of Doctor Carey constantly; his prophecy that she would go back to his care rang in her ears. It made her dry her eyes and stamp her foot.

She was a fool, an utter fool! There was nothing, the matter with her body; her trouble lay in her mind and she was too weak to conquer it, as any woman who was not an idiot should be able to do. Doctor Carey could do nothing for her; nobody could do anything for her but herself. He had never done anything for her anyway, medically. What he had done had been accomplished by the inspiration of his personality. She knew well that not the least of his success lay in his ability to reconstruct the mental condition of his patients; the rest of it was mostly fresh air, wholesome food, and regular hours. She would not go back to him to be treated like a baby.

Her determination was adamant for a week. Then she received a note from



"You are the only man I have tried to love," she said.
 "I chose you, in cold blood, because you are
 the man I would like best to love."

him. He had never written to her before except in reply to her letters. He asked:

How are things going with you? My interest is, of course, purely scientific. Remember that if everything goes to smash, you can always come here.

Things had gone to smash certainly, but she would not confess it to him. What right had he to suggest that things might have gone to smash? Why was he so greatly interested in her? Their relations had been purely professional almost to the end of her time at the sanitarium.

She wrote him a note which was as cold and formal as she could make it; she did not admit that things had gone to smash, but she said that his prescription was worthless because the ingredients necessary to compound it were not obtainable. There was a tone of studied sarcasm throughout her note.

His answer came by telegraph:

Letter indicates case developing normally and taking its usual course. When will you arrive here?

She was very angry when she received it. Her anger did not decrease as the hours passed. She spent a nearly

sleepless night, but instead of being weary and forlorn the next morning she was keyed up to a high pitch of excitement, she craved action, there was a spirit of adventure in her. She wondered whether it foretold fever.

At breakfast another telegram came for her:

Please wire when you will arrive.

Within an hour she had discovered the time of the trains, her bag was packed, and she had wired that she would arrive at four o'clock that afternoon.

Doctor Carey himself met her with his car at the country station. He put her bag into the tonneau.

"Have you your trunk check?" he asked.

"No, nor a trunk."

"You expect a quick cure then, I take it?"

"There was not time to pack it," she answered. "It can come later if it's necessary. Why am I so greatly honored?"

"Just where does the honor lie? I'm probably very dense."

"Why did you meet me yourself?"

"Why did you tell me you were coming instead of sending word to the corporation? However, it's not important. You've been here before, so it will not be necessary for you to go through the entrance formalities again. Your case is serious. I thought it best to take you under observation at once. For that purpose I will take you for a drive if you don't mind."

He seemed to be serious, but Miss Kasson was not quite sure that he was. The procedure seemed a little absurd and she said so. She was in a rather belligerent frame of mind. Doctor Carey laughed at her.

"I take it for granted that you have not hooked a husband," he said.

"I told you that your prescription was worthless."

"Because you couldn't fall in love and wouldn't marry unless you did. I quite understand, but it is a most unfortunate condition of affairs, isn't it?"

"I don't see that at all."

"Do you mean that you don't agree with my diagnosis?"

"I mean exactly that." Helen did not mean exactly that, but she was not going to admit it.

"Then why are you here? Do you expect me to discover some marvelous treatment which will cure some imaginary disorder?"

"I haven't the slightest idea why I am here," she said.

"I suppose I shall have to determine the reason, among other things. How is the other half of the experiment? I don't know his name."

"I wish you wouldn't talk that way. It's not a pleasant subject. I'm terribly ashamed."

"You're not wholly to blame if a man can't make you love him when you're willing to help to the full extent of your ability. He would have made the attempt, have taken the risk, if he had known all the facts in the beginning."

"That may be so, but I've made him terribly unhappy, nevertheless."

"You should not be unhappy about it," the doctor said. "If love did not sometimes break hearts it would hardly be able, at other times, to fill them with the most perfect joy we can know. If fire did not sometimes burn our fingers it could not warm us." He turned to Helen and smiled. "That last is not quite so," he said; "but the idea is there. You played the game fairly. You might, perhaps, regret in the abstract, but nothing more. Do you?"

"I refuse to be talked out of——"

"Out of regret that you have not fallen in love?"

"Not at all! You know exactly what——" Miss Kasson's voice was as positive as she could make it.

"Please! I do understand. You

must not become excited; it is very bad for you. Do you see the beautiful ivy on that house, the stone one with the green shutters?"

She was quite willing to change the subject; she had no desire to argue, very little desire even to talk. The doctor's car, though not nearly so pretentious as her own, was very comfortable; her nerves, which had been on edge for so long, were calm; a peaceful, comfortable contentment had settled upon her.

It was not a new sensation; she had experienced it between the time when she had known that she was well and the day Doctor Carey had discharged her officially cured. She had rather thought then, and she thought now, that Doctor Carey's personality had something to do with it. She was quite aware that he exerted some soothing, mildly mesmeric influence over her. It was probably because he was a specialist in nervous diseases, a mannerism resulting from great experience with patients.

Curiously enough his hands fascinated her; they were large, hairy hands, undoubtedly very strong and certainly very skillful. Contact with other people had always been repulsive to her; she had never kissed other women except under dire necessity, she had never let a man kiss her largely because she did not want to be kissed rather than for propriety's sake, even accidental contact with other people had been displeasing to her, and in dancing she had kept as far from her partner as she fairly could, yet Doctor Carey's fingers, laid upon her professionally, had thrilled her. She had shut her eyes and hoped that his examination would be long. Now she watched his hands on the steering wheel. They were symbolic of the man himself, even though the remarkable gentleness of his touch was entirely a matter of training. He was large and much taller than she; there was about him the suggestion of

great power, mental as well as muscular. And she appreciated that he possessed not only superficial courtesy but an inborn consideration for the feelings of others.

In the car with him she was entirely content with the comfort of the moment. She was willing to forget the man she had made unhappy and the uncertainty of her health in the future. The present was sufficient unto itself. She dozed, languor enveloped her; what little they said was of the country through which they were driving. They reached the sanitarium after six o'clock.

"The main building is full to overflowing," Doctor Carey said, "so I got a room for you in a cottage, this cottage." He had stopped at the gate. "I think you will find it very comfortable here. The food is especially good. You'll not need a nurse for the present. And by the way, are you still absolutely sure that you could not fall in love with a man until you knew that he loved you?"

She looked at him for an instant questioningly.

"I'm still very sure of that," she said.

"Too bad, too bad," he muttered. "Let me help you with your bag."

A woman opened the door and took charge of Helen in an entirely professional manner. Helen found her room large and comfortable. She changed her dress and went down to dinner at seven o'clock, the time which had been stated by the woman with the professional manner. A waitress led her to one of three small tables in the dining room. She was hardly seated when Doctor Carey came in and sat down with her.

"Why, isn't this nice!" she exclaimed, and it was very easy for her to put surprise in her voice and to let it suggest that she was not at all sure that it was nice.

"How is your appetite? Are you



"When did you know
that I loved you, so that
you could love me?"
His voice was very low.

hungry?" The doctor ignored her voice.

"Yes, I am," she admitted, but she was not willing to have her first point ignored. "Why am I entitled to all these honors?" she asked.

"Please don't look at it that way. You are under observation, that's all. Please act perfectly natural and eat what and as much as you like. Don't let my being here disturb you in the least."

"I'll try not to," she said, laughing, "though I can't help feeling that it is all"—she hesitated and smiled—"that you, or I—are perfectly ridiculous."

"It must be I. It is impossible that Miss Kasson should be ridiculous," he said with mock gallantry, and she made a little face at him.

Before dinner was over she yawned.

"So——" he muttered. "Sleepy?"

"Yes, sleepy and tired."

"There seems to be nothing wrong

with your appetite and you are sleepy. Will you tell me why you are here, what you expect me, any one, to do for you?"

"I came because you advised me to come. I felt that I was, at least morally, still under your care."

"That was it, was it? Then I suppose I shall have to find something wrong with you, if that's physically possible, and cure it. It means a lot of hard work for me, I'm afraid, but we might as well get at it. Can you come to my office, say, at eight-thirty?"

She could, of course, and said so, though she felt that the whole thing was utter nonsense.

She went out of doors at eight o'clock. Doctor Carey's office was not five minutes' walk away. She felt perfectly well, she had never felt better in her life, she was a fool, plain fool, on a fool's errand. She had a half hour to pass and she could not pass it sitting still. She craved action, the languor of the afternoon had passed completely away. She walked along the road. The cool evening air was pleasant and invigorating; she filled her lungs with it and stretched her arms outward. Some subtle emotion thrilled her. She felt the thrill, but made no attempt to analyze it.

She approached Doctor Carey's office in a wide circle, using up the half hour precisely. He was alone, and shut the door behind her as she entered. He looked her over carefully.

"An extremely mysterious patient," he said and, taking her wrist in his hand, felt her pulse. "A little high," he said. "I wonder what that means?"

"It doesn't mean anything," she said emphatically. "I'm perfectly well."

"Then why the panic, why the terrible fear that you were not going to stay well? Why did you come here?"

"I don't know why I came. It was a sudden impulse."

The doctor gazed at her earnestly.

"And you let a sudden impulse upset the smooth continuity of my life, to say nothing of the whole sanitarium. Will you step here a moment?"

He made some show of placing a lamp on his desk so that its light fell as he desired.

"Will you stand here—that's it—that's right, and let me see your eyes. Look into both of mine."

"I can't—at the same time."

"I can see both of yours."

She looked first into one, then into the other of the doctor's eyes. He had not told her how long she must do it; she supposed she must do it until he told her to stop. It seemed that he would never tell her to stop.

Finally he turned away and stood for a moment with his back toward her, fumbling with the catch of a small box on his desk.

"Well," she asked, "did you see anything?"

"Of course, but I never place any confidence in what I see in a woman's eyes. The greatest authorities agree, almost without exception, that the female eye is one of the greatest if not actually the greatest liar extant. I employ it in the indicative sense only. I never deduce a symptom from it without corroborating evidence."

He paid no attention to her, but stood before her dangling a stethoscope in his fingers.

"Will you take off your jacket?" he said.

"I will, of course, if you want me to, but I'm quite sure that there's nothing wrong with my heart."

"You're sure it's beating?"

"Yes, quite sure."

"Beating hard?" he asked.

"Normally."

"That's all that's necessary. I simply wanted to be sure that it was going. Forgive me if I ask you a very personal question. Do you use—what shall I call it?—scent of any sort?"

"No, none at all."

"Then how do you account for the exquisite perfume which comes from your hair? I noticed it particularly while I was examining your eyes. It may be a clew to your ailment."

Helen did not answer for a moment; she was blushing.

"You are teasing me," she said.

"Do you accuse me, lightly, of casting aside the ethics of my profession?" Then before she could answer he went on: "Do you use rouge?"

She shook her head, and her expression suggested that she was reluctant to answer his question at all.

"Then the roses in your cheeks are natural," he said solemnly. "A most curious case. I wonder if I am beginning to understand it. Would your mind coming close to the lamp again?"

She rose and went to the lamp.

"Will you let me see your tongue?"

She looked up at him, and even in that tense moment she was glad that it was necessary for her to look up to him. He stood close to her, waiting.

"I won't!" she muttered.

"You won't? You mean that——"

"I mean that I won't stick out my tongue."

"So-o-o," he hummed. "Of course it is not ladylike under ordinary circumstances, but do you realize now that it is a grave breach of discipline? You are attempting to thwart my diagnosis."

"Fiddlesticks!"

"I wish that I could look upon your ailments as lightly as you do," he said.

"There's nothing the matter with me, and you know it!" she exclaimed.

"Then won't you tell me, honestly, why you came back?"

She stared at him for a moment and then her eyes dropped and she drew her breath in sharply.

"Why did you come back?" he asked again.

She looked up for an instant and then downward again.

"I don't know," she murmured.

"I wonder if I know. You are well and happy here, you are not away from here, naturally you must stay here. Are you willing to do that?"

She did not answer. She felt his fingers touch her hair and impart to her an exquisite sensation. She felt her hand in his, impossible to withdraw. His fingers on her hair slipped downward till his arm was around her shoulders. She did not resist.

"When did you know that I loved you, so that you could love me?" His voice was very low.

Her head went back, he saw her face, he saw a tiny smile come on her lips.

"I—I—I'm not—quite sure," she whispered.

"You came back to me—just to me—to stay with me always?"

"Yes."

"But please believe—I did not know—I did not understand—until this afternoon—until to-night."

"Your power of perception is completely lacking. I knew it——"

"I hate you—oh, how I love you! Can you love a brazen woman like me who came here just to——"

A knock came on the doctor's door. He did not move.

"In a moment, I'm engaged," he said to the door. Then he spoke to Helen. "Am I engaged?" he asked.

"Good heavens, I hope so!" she cried. "Otherwise your conduct is most unprofessional."

Mrs. Carey is recognized, by the profession, as one of Doctor Carey's most successful cases.



Phyllis *and the* Bright Lights

By Arthur Tuckerman

Author of "The Silver Lady," "Black Magic," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY T. VICTOR HALL

Her first little flier into bohemia threatened disastrous results. Just how Phyllis escaped is a good story.

SHE was in the chrysalis stage, and consequently inclined to be a little sensitive concerning that which she termed her "personal liberty."

"Well, anyway, he's coming to call on me at four o'clock this afternoon," she announced with an air of finality.

Aunt Katherine Kay, arrayed for church in pale mauve taffeta which rustled disagreeably whenever she moved, straightened up suddenly in her chair. Phyllis had been prattling about this man Laurens for the past eight days. As long as he remained part of the dances where Phyllis met him, aunt Katherine felt unable to protest; but now Laurens had suddenly emerged from the sphere of supper tables, stag lines, and fox trots, where he properly belonged, and had announced his intention of ringing the Kays' front-door bell. It was a brazen case.

"You should be more careful," frowned aunt Katherine, "than to invite to our house a man about whom we know nothing!"

Her voice trailed off plaintively, and she looked across the breakfast table toward her husband as if seeking support from him. But uncle Peter Schuyler

Kay, securely hidden behind his newspaper, preserved his usual discreet neutrality.

"I didn't ask him," explained Phyllis, her blue eyes all a-twinkle; "he invited himself. He's like that, when he wants his own way."

Aunt Katherine's frown became a positive menace. That any man should dare to present himself at the Kays' without an invitation! Inconceivable!

The Kays lived in that quiet, essentially "nice" stretch of old Fifth Avenue which lies between Washington Square and Fourteenth Street; theirs was a solemn old house of brownstone, flanked on either side by other houses of a like solemnity. A forbidding mansion, you would say, except perhaps for those few moments at dusk on a winter's evening when old Cooper went shuffling from room to room with a long waxen taper, lighting the gas. Then the narrow windows would brighten, one by one, into long panels of yellow light which streamed obliquely through the evening mist until you almost longed to be invited within.

Here Phyllis was born, and here she lived in a kind of beautiful seclusion.



"A date? A date? Do you mean you have an engagement with this—er—Laurens man?"

She knew very few human beings of her own age until, when she reached sixteen, she was permitted to attend certain junior dances; this was after aunt Katherine had surveyed the list of patronesses and found most of them sufficiently Knickerbocker to pass criticism. Thereafter Phyllis' acquaintance, especially with the opposite sex, grew rapidly. Young men began to pay Sunday-afternoon calls, during which they balanced a cup of orange pekoe perilously on one knee and a plate of cinnamon toast on the other, and raved innocently to Phyllis about football, prohibition, and the Midnight Frolic. All of which she, of course, found delightful.

This Laurens matter, however, was different. Everything Phyllis said about him irritated aunt Katherine. He was twenty-six, while most of Phyllis'

friends were freshmen; he had no particular occupation except writing occasional bits of radical poetry for a radical magazine published somewhere in Greenwich Village.

"But you'll like him," insisted Phyllis as she buttered her toast. "He positively breathes cleverness."

Aunt Katherine sniffed audibly.

"Talks in epigrams, I suppose. Oh, I know the kind! Even cleverness, Phyllis, can be vulgar if carried to extremes."

She rose from her chair, pausing to add:

"By the way, Mrs. Melville and her son will drop in this afternoon. Such a pity this other man is coming.

But be sure you're nice to Sidney; he's a dear boy!"

Phyllis made a furtive little grimace and tossed her head of bobbed golden hair.

"I can't see Sidney this afternoon. I've made a date."

Aunt Katherine's thin white hands flew above her head.

"A date? A date? Do you mean you have an engagement with this—er—Laurens man?"

Phyllis nodded. She was becoming dreadfully embarrassed. To make matters worse, uncle Peter was looking mildly annoyed because she had disturbed his perusal of the sacred editorial page.

"I promised to go for a walk with Mr. Laurens," she blurted out desperately.

Aunt Katherine collapsed in her

chair; uncle Peter jumped up from his. They both began to talk at once.

"Walking with a *man*?"

"At your age!"

"On a Sunday afternoon!"

"Why, I never heard of such a thing!"

"I can't imagine where you get those ideas. Not from the Kay family, I'm sure."

And so on.

Phyllis longed to rush from the room, but she didn't dare because uncle Peter would have called her back in a booming voice, and whenever uncle Peter's voice began to "boom" she felt weak at the knees. So she sat in her chair, very still, and tried to look as demure as possible.

"Seems as if I can't do anything but just stick around this old house," she murmured.

Uncle Peter suddenly laughed; it was his sense of humor that generally saved these situations.

"Oh, well! If you must, why, have your poet friend in to tea. Tell him you can't go out—say you've got a cold, or something like that."

Aunt Katherine merely frowned.

The magnificent Laurens arrived promptly at four. He was clad in morning coat, fawn-colored waistcoat and gloves, lavender trousers superbly creased—he would have died had any one called them "pants" in his presence. His black hair was smooth and glistening, his minute mustache waxed with infinite care. He wore a white carnation in his buttonhole, and an air of supreme self-satisfaction.

Phyllis met him in the dimly lighted hallway and led him hurriedly to the small reception room where she entertained her friends.

"Little colonial flower," he murmured, bowing low over her hand. "A perfect picture in the exquisite setting of this mellow old house."

Phyllis giggled at that, and made room for him on a silken-covered settee. She was beginning to know Laurens' "line" pretty well by now, but it was still enjoyable. She explained that she had a slight cold and was afraid she wouldn't be able to go walking.

Laurens raised his eyebrows and nodded slowly.

"I'm sorry," he said. "Because it may be a long time before I see you again." He sighed when he said this, as if it mattered a very great deal, and leaned closer to her. "You know, you dance just perfectly. I'll never forget the first night I met you, that waltz after supper, in the corner by those palms. If we could only arrange a little party *à deux*, so that we could dance away the hours together. Just you and I!"

Her eyes widened.

"I don't see how. I'm never allowed to do nice things like that. Oh, if only I could get away from this old house, just once, for a really good time!"

He shrugged his shoulders and looked at her, smiling.

"Where there's a will, you know. An evening in a quiet little place. No one but ourselves need ever know——"

He switched off at a tangent to a new train of thoughts. This was supposed to be one of his attractions; one never knew what he was going to say next. Women called him versatile; men said he was mentally unbalanced.

"To me you're like some lovely little caged bird, longing to preen its wings in the great open world. Your life is your own to do what you want with it, only you don't realize it. I could show you some of the happiness that is to be found, if you only would let me."

He took from his pocket a small notebook and consulted its pages hurriedly.

"Would you care to meet me Wednesday night, say at ten o'clock? I could arrange a little supper, and some dancing."

Her heart began to thump violently. Wednesday! That was the night she was to go to Marianne's to dinner, and then on to some dull symphony concert. What fun it would be to plunge forth into the gay night life of New York, with this man of the world as her escort! And nobody need ever know, because she could trust Marianne, if she could trust any one.

"I—I think I could go, Wednesday," she stammered; "if you'll meet me outside Marianne Ely's house, next door, at ten o'clock. I'd pretend to go to a concert. Marianne would help me."

And then she added, greatly at the expense of her own dignity:

"Only, for goodness' sake, don't ring their doorbell!"

Laurens nodded with that delicious understanding way of his. To relieve the tension, she rose and wandered over to a piano in the corner of the room; her fingers began to drift over the keys, by picking out the air of a new song hit which she had heard at the dance several nights before. It was a little knock of hers, to remember tunes like this, and she played the thing almost faultlessly. The blatant, syncopated melody sounded queerly incongruous as it echoed through the somber halls of that staid old house.

"Splendid!" cried Laurens, and applauded vigorously when she rejoined him on the sofa.

A little later a sudden babel of voices from the front hall interrupted him in the midst of a eulogy of Bakst. Phyllis hadn't the faintest idea who Bakst was, but she liked to hear Laurens talk. He glanced up as a lanky youth with a pale, melancholy face and untidy hair came sliding across the parquet floor toward them; the newcomer peered at them through large horn-rimmed spectacles as he approached, which gave him the effect of being round-shouldered.

"Hullo, Sidney," said Phyllis, with complete lack of enthusiasm.

"Lo!" mumbled the youth, and plumped himself into an armchair opposite Laurens, whom he began to eye with frank disapproval. Phyllis introduced them, but it was evident that Laurens considered Sidney Melville unworthy of further attention. He continued to babble of Bakst.

Sidney's approval changed to open hostility. He tried desperately to change the subject of conversation from the new art to rowing prospects. It seemed, he said, that the Harvard freshman crew was pretty light this year. Now the Yale crew—

"Good gracious, Sidney!" Phyllis burst out with some asperity. "You're always talking about your old crew, or was it football last time?"

Sidney relapsed into a moody silence after that; he placed his finger tips together, and stared at Laurens' white spats with an awful and persistent intensity. After old Cooper had served tea, Laurens rose to go, and as he bent low over Phyllis' hand, Sidney breathed a very audible sigh of relief.

"Isn't he just tremendously clever?" breathed Phyllis when the front door had closed. "He can talk about most anything in the whole world! And he writes the most wonderful poetry!"

"He's a regular tea hound," said Sidney with engaging frankness. "I know the kind. New York's just flooded with 'em on Sunday afternoons. Lord knows what they do the rest of the week! Where did you rake him up, anyway?"

"Well, of course," said Phyllis, raising her eyebrows, "if you're going to talk that way about my friends—"

The boy suddenly became serious.

"Look here, Phyllis. I've known you off and on for years. I've got a right to talk to you as an old friend, haven't I?"

"I suppose so," she admitted; "but old friends are awfully dull, especially when they start giving advice!"

"Well, I'd drop this fellow, if I were



"A good place, this," he remarked cryptically, and chuckled to himself.

you. He's a pretty poor sort of an egg for you to get clubby with."

Phyllis flushed, and tried to look calm.

"Dear Sidney," she begged with acid sweetness, "won't you stop being worried about my welfare? I think I'd rather even have you talk about rowing—or football!"

Sidney prepared to leave.

"When women are in the mood you're

in," he remarked with infinite manly dignity, "no man can do anything with them."

Taking into consideration the variety of entertainments at his disposal, Laurens' choice of the Jardin des Fleurs as the place in which to introduce Phyllis to the frivols of midnight New York is not easy to understand. Perhaps it was because he felt it unlikely that they

would run across any of her friends there. As a matter of fact, had he taken her to a resort stamped with the cachet of Knickerbocker approval, the evening might still have passed off without disaster, for Phyllis had been "out" so little that none of the gray-haired mothers of bobbed-hair daughters would have known who she was. Phyllis had just reached that stage when the families of old New York were beginning to say: "Peter Schuyler Kay's niece must be nearly old enough to make her début. Dear me, how time flies!"

Laurens met Phyllis at ten o'clock on Wednesday night; she came hurrying down the steps of Marianne's house, an ermine cloak wrapped tightly about her slim young figure.

"Adorable creature," he murmured, and helped her into a waiting limousine, which he had borrowed from an affluent friend.

"Where are we going?" Phyllis asked, as they rolled up the smooth asphalt of Fifth Avenue, past the gigantic, illuminated dial of the Metropolitan Tower.

"To a wonderful place where you and I can dance—forever, if we wish."

"If I'm not back by midnight," said Phyllis promptly, "the whole house will be in an uproar. Cooper goes to bed then, the sleepy, grotesque old thing!"

They swung into Broadway, and Phyllis craned her neck to gaze upward at the electric signs—a girl flashing to and fro upon a golden swing, a quivering, coruscating butterfly upon the petals of a giant flower—these things were still novel to her, although her home, where she was born, was scarcely two miles away.

"I love people to be happy with me," purred Laurens, giving her arm a little squeeze. He spoke as if he were a philanthropist who dealt out generous measures of happiness to all who sought it.

Presently the car drew up before an

arched doorway, arabesqued in red and blue electric lights. After that, impressions came crowding upon Phyllis in bewildering confusion. For a brief moment they were in a mirrored elevator, packed with jostling, loud-talking people; a pale youth wearing a striped collar smirked at her, and she smiled back so innocently that he turned away ashamed. Then they left the elevator and found themselves in a vast, dimly lighted room, the walls of which were covered with trellised vines; tables, tables, tables, as far as the eye could see, each one with more than its quota of laughing, hilarious men and women. An enormous head waiter, disheveled and perspiring, raised a beckoning finger and led them a zigzag course to an empty table in a corner of the room. Near by, a dozen swaying negroes upon a platform were blaring forth a lively, syncopated melody. The ebony lad at the piano fascinated Phyllis; he could not seem to keep still; he was bobbing up and down in his seat like a cork afloat upon a troubled sea.

While Laurens was engaged in earnest conversation with the head waiter, Phyllis gazed wide-eyed about her. At a table not far from her a sallow-complexioned man with curly black hair had his arm about the shoulders of a plump, henna-haired woman whose cerise cheeks were beginning to melt from the heat. Her sleeveless scarlet dress looked, somehow, much too tight for her. The dancing floor was packed with bobbing, swaying couples, all of whom danced very closely.

Laurens handed her a menu.

"What do you want?"

After a little hesitation she ordered ginger ale and chicken sandwiches. When the drinks came, in long, tall glasses, she noticed that his was of a rich amber color. He grinned knowingly.

"A good place, this," he remarked cryptically, and chuckled to himself.

Presently they danced. The air was suffocating, and he held her very close as they started round the room. They were constantly colliding with other couples. When the music ceased she fell thankfully into her chair, feeling just a little faint and dizzy. It was all very strange and new and interesting, but somehow she knew that she oughtn't to be there, and she felt that the other people knew it, especially the henna-haired woman at the next table, who stared at her with cold, hard, disapproving eyes.

Laurens called the head waiter again, and more drinks appeared.

"You dance just perfectly to-night," he murmured, and his hand sought hers under the table. She suddenly caught sight of a clock above the entrance of the room.

"Good gracious! It's nearly twelve!" she cried. "I've just got to go. Won't you take me home, please?"

He frowned at that, and emptied the contents of his glass in one gulp.

"Home? At this hour! Good Lord, no!" He began to laugh. "Come on. Let's dance again."

She looked at him critically, and then, for the first time, a wave of revulsion spread over her. His face was pallid, beaded with perspiration, his eyes slightly bloodshot. As the orchestra struck up a crashing one-step he rose to his feet, swaying toward her.

She didn't know what she could do. She glanced, frightened, about her, and was suddenly aware that some one was standing just behind her chair. She looked up into the face of Sidney Melville.

"May I have this dance?" he asked gravely.

Laurens saw the boy then, and stared at him with growing resentment.

"Is he a friend of yours?" he asked, pointing at Sidney with sudden suspicion.

"You ought to know," she retorted,

"considering that you met him last Sunday at my house."

For a moment there was an awkward pause. Then Sidney took her gently by the arm and led her to the dance floor. Over her shoulder Phyllis saw Laurens watching them with sullen, half-closed eyes.

"What are you doing here?" she asked Sidney teasingly, after they had danced a few steps; and then bit her lip because she guessed what his reply would be.

"Don't you think I'm the one to ask that?"

His voice was drowned by a long-drawn wail from the saxophone. She looked up at him quickly, and saw that he had the grace not to smile. Inwardly she thanked him for that.

Presently he whispered in her ear:

"Are you all right? I mean, can I—help you in any way?"

All her unreasonable young pride flew to her then, and she answered him with a characteristic toss of her yellow curls:

"Of course I'm all right, Sidney. I'm having—a very—good time."

She gulped out the words almost as if it hurt her to say them. He merely nodded; there seemed to be nothing more to talk about, so they continued to dance in solemn silence. When the music had ceased playing, he led her back to the table and left her, with a stiff, awkward little bow.

"Damn' college boy!" sneered Laurens, nodding at his retreating back. "Ought to be in bed. Hi! Waiter!"

At that moment Phyllis became aware of a violent commotion which had arisen at the far end of the room, near the entrance door. She could see the fat head waiter, red in the face, waving his arms excitedly; he was shouting at a man in a checked suit and derby hat, who was listening to him with a cold, supercilious smile. Three other men, with sharp, thin faces, were also listening to him.



"What's that kid doin'
here, anyways?"
he asked.

Men and women at tables near the group were rising from their chairs in a sudden, panicky alarm.

"Keep your seats!" bawled one of the men with an air of peremptory authority.

Laurens leaned across the table and clutched her arm.

"Good Lord! We're raided! What—what can we do?"

To Phyllis, he was contemptible at

that moment, with his staring eyes, his pale, frightened face; he made no effort to move; he was utterly helpless.

"Why in the devil did I bring you here?" he moaned plaintively. "What a damn' fool I was—what a damn' fool——"

She began to plead with him desperately.

"But—but surely you can do something to get us out of here. I thought

you knew how to act in an affair like this. I can't get my name in the papers. I just can't! They—they'd kill me, I think, if they ever heard about it."

The argument across the room ceased abruptly as the head waiter was whisked out of the door by two broad-shouldered men and dragged into the elevator. Half a dozen plain-clothes men filed into the room and spread out among the tables, stopping here and there to pick up a glass and taste its contents. Notebooks and pencils appeared suddenly.

Across the dance floor a fat blonde screamed shrilly.

The negroes dropped their instruments and fled from their platform with hoarse shouts; Phyllis saw them disappear through a narrow doorway behind a cluster of palms.

Two of the plain-clothes men were nearing their table. Laurens grabbed up his glass and emptied its contents into a vase of white roses. Just then some one grasped Phyllis' arm, and she heard Sidney whispering hurriedly in her ear:

"Quick!" I think I can get you out of this, if you'll do just what I tell you."

She glanced swiftly at Laurens; he was watching the approaching detectives with a sort of frozen fascination. She rose and followed Sidney, who led her to the now-deserted orchestra platform. No one seemed to notice them; all eyes in that room were upon the plain-clothes men.

"Do you remember," he whispered, "how well you played that 'Dixieland Blues' one afternoon last winter when I came to see you?"

She nodded in utter bewilderment.

"Don't ask any questions, and don't answer any. Just sit down at that piano and play that old tune for all you're worth! I'll follow, on the drum and traps."

It was a new Sidney, strangely calm

and self-possessed; he was almost domineering, but this was no time to quarrel. The whole place was in an uproar, and not a soul noticed them as they climbed to the platform. In a kind of trance Phyllis sat down at the piano, and her fingers wandered for an instant over the keys. Then the tune came back to her memory. The "Dixieland Blues" burst forth loudly, triumphantly.

At her side Sidney crashed the great drum.

And Phyllis played the piano then as she had never played before, her supple young body swaying with the syncopation, her fingers flying up and down the keys. Had some one entered the Jardin des Fleurs at that moment he would have seen a strange sight. At the piano a delicate, golden-haired little girl in a green and silver evening dress was strumming out syncopated music as if she had been doing the thing every night of her young life. Beside her a serious-looking youth with touseled hair and horn-rimmed spectacles was beating upon a great drum, clashing cymbals, whirling castanets above his head. The time they kept was perfect, but their young faces were set grimly, as if their very lives depended upon that absurd melody.

One of the plain-clothes men came strolling up just as Phyllis stopped playing, breathless. For an instant he regarded them both quizzically, rubbing his heavy chin.

"Come on!" he said, jerking his head. "The both of you!"

And then Sidney spoke in a strange jargon that was almost incomprehensible to Phyllis; his jaw protruded truculently.

"Me and this jane?" he asked incredulously. "Aw! Can that stuff! We're musicians; we ain't got nothin' to do with this joint except to make music."

The man looked at Phyllis critically. The old Knickerbocker in her tri-

umphed over the garish surroundings, and it puzzled him not a little.

"What's that kid doin' here anyways?" he asked.

"She's my sister," whined Sidney, "and I don't want her chances busted the first night she lands a job in this city. S'posin' her name was to get in the papers—you get what I mean? Have a heart!"

The man looked at the healthy curve of Phyllis' pink cheeks and suddenly smiled; it was a long time since he had seen *real* pink cheeks like that. He nodded significantly toward the little doorway behind the palms, through which the negroes had fled.

"If you're here when I come back," he said, grinning. "I'll run you both in."

He turned on his heel and strode away, still smiling.

Phyllis glanced toward the table where she had been sitting; it was vacant. Two plain-clothes men were supporting Laurens between them; he was weak-kneed and trembling, shouting vague, incoherent absurdities. With a little sigh of relief she seized Sidney's arm and felt suddenly safe.

On the corner of Broadway he hailed a taxi, and they climbed in. For a long time there was silence as she grad-

ually recovered from the shock of it all. At last, as they turned into Fifth Avenue, she turned to him.

"Sidney," she began very humbly, "I didn't realize you were so terribly clever. That was a wonderful idea of yours."

The more she gave thought to the swift events of the evening, the more puzzled she became. All her ideas and her ideals had become, somehow, reversed. Of a sudden she felt infinitely young and foolish.

"I s'pose I never really appreciated you before, Sidney. My, but you were just *magnificent*—in all that trouble!"

Sidney's feet began to shuffle up and down the floor of the taxicab; he clasped and unclasped his hands nervously. He was suddenly and horribly aware that Phyllis was trying to clothe him in chivalrous armor. It was awful.

"And—and after the w-way I treated you on Sunday," she went on tearfully.

Sidney gave a loud cough.

"Since I saw you then," he blurted out desperately, "we've got a crackajack new man for the freshman crew. Now those Yale fellows——"

He was quoting statistics of the Olympic games by the time the cab drew up at the door of her house.

BLUE

THERE'S the blue of the sea that keeps summoning me

Till my heart is half maddened with yearning

For the thrust and the lunge of the bows as they plunge

And the throb of the screws that are churning.

There's the blue of the sky that is distant and high,

And that calls to a man to be marching

Over trails steep or low that shall lead him to know

Wet jungles and desert lands parching.

Though I feel the great thrall that thrills wanderers all,

I am held by a spell that is truer;

Blue of sky, blue of sea, have their glamor for me—

But the eyes of my sweetheart are bluer!

BERTON BRALEY.



The Tongue-tied Muse

By Philip Merivale

Author of "Equity of Redemption," "The Cromwell of the Caribbees," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY EDWARD C. CASWELL

Another of the fascinating stories which the versatile Philip Merivale is writing for SMITH'S. This one is of a girl with grand-opera aspirations.

O H—oh—oh—oh—oh—oh—oh—
As the arpeggio died away and the girl's rounded mouth composed itself into its normal smile, the little man at the piano bent reverently over the keys; then he fixed his eyes upon his pupil.

"No more!" he said softly, as if fearing to scatter a lingering echo of her voice.

"But I have ten more minutes," the girl protested, her face clouding.

"No more to-day," repeated the master. "I want you to go away with a perfect tone in your heart."

He crossed the well-furnished studio and, leaning one elbow on the mantelpiece, gazed profoundly on the miniature bust of Beethoven.

"Perfect!" echoed the girl, laughing excitedly. "Maestro, don't exaggerate!"

She made a quick movement toward him. The light of a bright October afternoon struck a gleam in her brown hair and irradiated her eager face as she stood waiting for the word which should confirm or modify the master's compliment.

Signor Pozzi seated himself informally on the low hearth stool, his chubby back to the empty grate. He

was, to tell the truth, a little too stout to adopt this negligent attitude with any degree of elegance, but like a true artist he was blind to his personal deficiencies, and had even, to some extent, the faculty of making others oblivious of them.

"I do not exaggerate," he replied. "But," he held up a warning finger, "having caught perfection, let us hold him!"

"Oh," she cried, sitting on the settee opposite him, "you are so encouraging! I owe everything to you! Bless you!"

He shrugged his shoulders.

"God has given you the voice," he admitted handsomely. "I perfect it."

"It's awfully kind of you," she murmured, a feeble response she felt, but perfection is a difficult gift to acknowledge in adequate words.

"But where shall we find the artist soul?" he continued. "That I cannot make, or"—he looked exceedingly coy—"or perhaps can I?"

She clasped her hands around one knee and tranquilly surveyed him. There was in her deep-set, wide gray eyes a look of undisturbed innocence, an unquestioning confidence in the world, that remained unruffled when Signor Pozzi stretched out his hand and

touched her fingers. He nearly fell off the hearth stool in the effort, but he recovered a decently romantic attitude on his knees before her, with one of her hands between his soft palms.

"Margaret!" he murmured.

She let him retain her hand because she had come to accept it as the normal expression of artistic emotion—she had completed a year's study with Signor Pozzi—but he had never knelt to her before. Still this excess may have been forced by the "perfection" he had that day, for the first time, discovered in her tones. Her gray eyes revealed nothing of these reflections. They could not help observing what hitherto she had managed to doubt, that the master wore a toupee. He may have felt her scrutiny, for he swept a hand over the top of his head and stood up.

"Do not blame me," he said. "Can I, an artist, behold the perfection of my art without worship? You shall be the idol of the world, Margaret, but will you thank the 'umble master whose passion has made the marble breathe?"

"You know how grateful I am," she cried. "I can never thank you!"

"You can!" he murmured.

She regarded him coolly. Signor Pozzi fumbled in the breast pocket of his velvet coat and, producing a leather case, held it open for her inspection. It was a pocket photograph case and behind the celluloid she recognized her handwriting.

"How funny you are to keep them!" she laughed.

He put them back in his pocket.

"It is a hard thing," he sighed, "to give a soul to a butterfly. We must be so gentle not to hurt their beauty, but without it how shall the bird sing?"

From which confusion of metaphors Margaret derived only a pleasant sense of impending greatness, but as she was unpracticed in the temperamental vernacular she could make no appropriate rejoinder.

"I will make a vow!" cried Pozzi recklessly. "In six months you shall sing at the Metropolitan!"

She looked up startled and excited.

"Oh!" she exclaimed. "You mean it? You're not just jollying me?"

He frowned portentously.

"Five years it takes to make a singer, but for you miracles have been performed. Do you not trust me? I do not 'jolly'!"

"But it sounds too wonderful!"

"First, though," said he sternly, casting his eyes toward the ceiling, "a soul! Oh, God, a soul for Margaret!"

The shrill sound of an electric bell intercepted his prayer. Signor Pozzi stifled a curse.

"To-morrow," he whispered. "At four o'clock."

He stepped briskly back to the piano in time to assume an attitude of deep absorption before the door opened and a faded woman in black with a black apron announced a gentleman calling.

"The waiting room——" Pozzi waved an irritable hand.

"He hasn't come for a lesson," said the attendant, rolling a hollow eye at Margaret. "He wants Miss Laidler."

"I can't——" began Pozzi; but what particular incapacity he was about to confess was saved from discovery by the entrance of a big young man in gray flannel trousers and a rough tweed coat, who, without formal greeting, strode across the room and laid two great hands on Margaret's shoulders before she recognized him.

"Hullo there, Peggy!" exclaimed the intruder.

"Why, it's Mark!" she cried. "Well! When did you arrive?"

"To-day, of course. Come along! Let's go, if you've finished."

"Meet Signor Pozzi," said Margaret. "Signor, this is Mr. Mark Holmes, my third cousin."

"Once removed, but now happily restored," added Mark confidently.



"Margaret!" he murmured. She let him retain her hand because she had come to accept it as the normal expression of artistic emotion.

After five years' absence, which included participation in the war, Mark might be forgiven for assuming that he would be cordially welcome. He was welcome, of course, but Margaret could not help thinking that he had chosen a most unpropitious moment for his reappearance. Just now she wanted to think. He was interfering with a

train of thought started by Pozzi and leading, if only Mark would be quiet for a minute, to glowing summits of artistic achievement. She couldn't help it if she had changed in five years. She was still very fond of Mark. But there was a new seriousness in her life, an aim and a promise. It was unfortunate, it was annoying.

For she could not acquit herself so easily of something like callousness. It was too late now, but, she reflected as they went down in the elevator, she ought to have received Mark with more emotion. He had probably been expecting a kiss, the cousinly kind that had been current between them since childhood.

"You see, I've no one to bother about me," he had said to her as a youth of twenty-one; a remark she remembered thinking rather hard, but, with the pride of eighteen years, she had offered no objection to it.

And now, after five years, he had come back and imposed himself on her—in her irritation she actually used as harsh a term as that—just when her life was full, devoted to a single object under the guidance of Signor Pozzi.

She stole a glance at her companion. What a boy he seemed! He had looked, doubtless, on strange and fearful things, yet how much younger he was than she! What did he know of such aspirations as filled her thoughts? He could never appreciate her ambitions. It required an artist to understand an artist. She liked his ruddy face and clear blue eyes, his erect figure and broad shoulders. Pozzi was little and fat, but he was an artist.

"Well, chatterbox," said Mark as they stepped into the street, "where are we going?"

"Home!" she said.

"Oh, no! Let's go out and have some tea," he pleaded.

But she was firm. They climbed in her waiting car.

"This is better than the old flivver," he pronounced.

"It wasn't a flivver," she remonstrated.

"Compared with this car, it was. And what a palace it is on Fifth Avenue there! I suppose you have all sorts of things going on, haven't you?"

"No," she said. "It's awfully quiet.

But don't say anything to daddy about the place. He's rather funny about his money."

"Not I," Mark laughed. "I'll keep the secret of his wicked past."

There was a silence.

"I say, I haven't offended you, have I?" he asked.

"I'm thinking," said Margaret a trifle impatiently.

And thereafter the silence remained unbroken save for a lugubrious sibilant from Mark designed to sustain the appearance of better spirits than he was actually enjoying.

"Come in to tea?" asked Margaret, as they stood on the sidewalk in front of her father's house. The invitation was spoken half-heartedly and Mark refused it.

His refusal brought her quickly to a sense of her remissness.

"Well," she said more heartily, "you must come to dinner to-morrow."

He accepted with frigid politeness and her heart smote her as she watched him stride away, disappointment in every line of his figure.

"But," she defended herself, "what does he expect? We're only distant cousins, we can't help growing up. And, besides, I must think."

If, however, she hoped by banishing him for twenty-four hours to secure a recess for contemplation of her glorious prospects, she was disappointed, for her daydreams were perpetually dissipated by the intrusion of his presence. This was not Mark's fault, as she was bound to admit; none the less she resented it. How could she practice and at the same time keep before her that goal toward which every faculty must be bent, if the vision of Mark's disappointed face and humped, protesting shoulders persisted in intervening?

The fact, of which Margaret was quite innocent, was that she was developing the artistic conscience which seeks to repel all influences, to repudiate all

claims on the affections which may possibly entangle or conflict with the artist's purpose. The proverbial irritability of poets is nothing but the protective dispensation of nature, the fierce maternal instinct in hawk or rabbit alike for the preservation from alien contacts of a delicate and precious life.

But in self-analysis Margaret was totally unskilled. She could only scold Mark and herself alternately for a state of mind she had never before experienced and from which she earnestly prayed to escape. Paradoxically, it was some relief the next afternoon to find her master more difficult to please.

"I don't seem to do anything right to-day," she whimpered, after listening to a cruel burlesque of her tones.

He grunted contemptuously, and she was thrilled with a sudden suspicion that possibly Art was not everything, and that it would be very jolly to meet Mark on the old terms and talk about the ordinary things which used to amuse them before her life had become sublimated.

"And I thought yesterday I was getting along so well," she sighed.

The master grumbled something about "not built in a day."

She hugged her discomfiture with a curious relish.

"I can speak bouquets," said he roughly, "but I teach nothing by them."

"I understand," she said humbly. "But you needn't be sore."

"Who would not?" he cried, flinging out his hands. "I work and work and pray, and then a long-legg'd ass walks in and—poof!—all my labor is wasted."

Her brows knit in a puzzled little frown.

"Oh, no!" he continued. "I can do no more. Your voice betrays you to me. You are in love. I am through."

And he slammed the piano and pouted like a sulky baby.

"Oh, nonsense!" Margaret laughed, though there was a sinking at her heart.

"You're wrong. You can't mean poor old Mark!"

He scowled through his glasses.

"We've been friends—and enemies—all our lives. Really!"

He let the scowl fade away and took her hand. She drew it away.

"Why?" he asked, raising his eyebrows.

"I don't know," she answered weakly.

"If I write to you again, will you reply?"

She shook her head.

"What's the sense?" she asked.

"Proud Margaret," he smiled patronizingly.

"I'm sorry my voice was so bad to-day," she murmured as she was leaving.

"You have pretty ears," said he enigmatically; "but you must not hide your voice behind them. We must open the head cavities and"—leaning romantically against the piano—"we must open the cavities of the heart."

The taciturn attendant helped her into her coat. Margaret had long since abandoned the attempt to draw her into conversation. She had an uneasy feeling that the woman disliked her. Pozzi was still at the studio door.

"Remember!" he called. "In six months—the Metropolitan!"

And so she went home in a more equable frame of mind, her vanity comfortably chastened, yet with the spark of ambition kept alive by her master's parting words. Altogether she could look forward with pleasure to Mark's presence at dinner.

Uptown New York knew nothing of Malcolm Laidler, a fact he bitterly resented, though not even his daughter suspected him of harboring so trivial a complaint. He was of a leonine, Carlylesque appearance and to the awe inspired by the severity of his features was added the baffling quality of deafness, which tended still further to remove him from the ordinary interests and relations of his kind. That such

a man should desire social celebrity or suffer his obscurity to rankle in his breast would hardly have been credited had he proclaimed it himself. Who would believe that he, Malcolm Laidler, actually chafed at the newspaper space given to Mundus' presence at the opera, Saul Mundus, the banker, whose daughter had married some semiroyalty? Laidler would hardly acknowledge to himself that he resented the public interest displayed in young Walter Crinling's annual migration to Palm Beach, young Crinling, who had inherited so many acres of that rock on which the Laidler limousine ran its daily rounds!

He was obliged in conscience to find a basis of cold reason to justify his aspirations. The doings of the social world were not intrinsically important, but relatively, in the present imperfect state of social development, they had a legitimate place and value. He could not reconcile himself to the indisputable fact that whereas his withdrawal from business would send a shiver throughout the world of finance, the social world was able to subsist very comfortably without his ever having entered it.

He was a man of deep sensibilities, easily hurt where he thought his confidence or affection abused, and quite unable to understand why strangers were so much in awe of him.

Mark, however, was no stranger, and the imminence of the big, sardonic head at the top of the table could not paralyze the young man's flow of conversation. He seemed totally oblivious of yesterday's disappointment, and Margaret was delighted to find that her own preoccupations had vanished. She rejoiced at the recovery of their old relations. Life, she reflected, was certainly more enjoyable without lofty ambitions. If only Mark would consent to be subordinated to her higher destiny, how pleasant it would be to have him around!

After dinner she sang. Mr. Laidler

endured it for about twenty minutes and then with a kiss and a perfunctory compliment stole away to his library. He was deaf and might be forgiven for a lack of enthusiasm; but even ignorance, she thought, could hardly explain Mark's indifference.

"You'll like this," she said, and sang a setting of Frank Bridge's to words of Tennyson, in which that composer has allowed himself a little more air than usual. Mark received it with the usual conventional expression of approval.

"Oh," she cried petulantly, "you don't care for music!"

"Yes, I do," he replied. "Some music."

And in proof of his assertion he dragged out a copy of "The Scottish Students' Song Book," and selected "The Tarpaulin Jacket" for himself. His voice was loud, toneless, and a little off key, but the exercise of it afforded him intense satisfaction. At any other time she would have laughed at him, but just now she was offended at his failure to appreciate her own progress in the art.

"That's enough of that silly song," she said, suddenly stopping.

"No, come on! Let's finish it," he remonstrated.

"It's such rubbish, Mark. You can play that stuff for yourself."

"Oh, this jealousy among artists!" he laughed. "You don't want to hear any one but yourself."

He was only joking, but it was enough to indicate his inability to perceive any distinction between his singing and hers. It was aggravating.

He proceeded to sing "Camptown Races," irregularly punctuating the tune with blows from his inexperienced forefinger on the keys.

"Oh, do be quiet!" she implored.

He laughed good-temperedly and came over to the chair where she had taken refuge.



"Oh," she cried petulantly, "you don't care for music!"

"Yes, I do," he replied. "Some music."

"Why, what's wrong with my voice?" he asked.

"It's all wrong," she replied. "It isn't a voice at all."

He had no illusions about his voice, but the most modest individual is apt to be sensitive when abruptly informed that his singing is offensive to others.

"It always spoils things," he said, "when people get too grand to enjoy just ordinary tunes and natural singing."

"Some people can't help liking real music," she maintained.

"Oh, for professionals it's all right," he admitted; "but for plain people what's the good of pretending you don't care for tunes that people have always liked?"

She made a little gesture of impatience.

"I don't pretend I can sing," he grumbled.

"Well, I do!" retorted she flatly.

"Why?"

There was a malicious twinkle in his eye. He had always been able to draw her on to a verbal disaster, and though she recognized the trap she could not help walking into it.

"I mean—I don't pretend," she explained loftily. "I mean I take it seriously—my singing, I mean."

"Yes, but why?" he asked softly.

"Oh, I don't expect *you* to appreciate it!" she cried. "Nobody who cares at all would insist on pulling out those awful old tunes after the others."

"Oh, come!" he expostulated. "I don't see why you should hog all the singing, you know. How was I to know you were such a superior performer?"

She turned to ice. The one intolerable thing to the half-trained artist is an unsolicited opinion from the uninitiated. He realized the extent of his crime, but between them it had always been a point of honor to go through with their quarrels; no withdrawal was expected, no apology required. Time settled their differences, usually overnight, but neither demanded victory, and both abhorred compromise.

And he was yet to learn that things had changed.

"I say, you've become awfully sensitive," he said, when the silence between them had remained unbroken for five minutes. "I suppose a fellow can have an opinion if he likes, can't he?"

"It depends what it's worth," she rejoined. "Some opinions are not worth holding, and in that case it is silly to express them. Unless," she added, rising from her chair and closing the opinion, "you are willing to change them."

"I will when I see cause," he said stoutly.

"It might help you," she remarked with assumed indifference, "to know that Signor Pozzi intends me to sing in opera at the Metropolitan. That may not weigh very much with you,

but you will understand my preferring his opinion to yours. And now I think I'll go to bed."

And without waiting for a reply she went.

So far, it was not unlike old times. Next morning he was to learn that the old order had changed. He was more surprised than alarmed. Quarrels with Margaret never lasted long. At seven o'clock he was awakened to receive a night letter. It ran:

My life is devoted in future to singing. You do not understand that a person can be serious about an art. I do not want compliments from a person who does not know. And I do not want criticism either. Till I can convince you that I am serious I had rather not see you.

"Rot!" he shouted to the four walls of his room, and immediately joined battle. He telegraphed:

I will not pretend what I do not feel. When I think you are a singer I will heartily congratulate you. But I am not going to flatter a girl just because she is pretty.

Secretly he hoped that the conclusion of this telegram might mitigate the severity of its beginning, whereas it only intensified it. It showed that he had not grasped as yet the sincerity of her aims if he imagined that a compliment on her appearance would balance his disparagement of her voice. For several days, with a weakening confidence, he awaited a summons which would tacitly infer forgiveness. But it did not come.

And gradually it dawned on him that life without frequent meetings with Margaret was going to be a very dull affair. Yet there was self-respect to be considered, and to be worthy of Margaret he must be worthy of himself—a vicious circle which seemed likely to keep them apart forever.

About two weeks later Mr. Laidler received a visit from Mark at the office. Such interviews as he condescended to grant rarely lasted more than ten min-

utes. It was assumed by those clerks who had attempted to divert Mark from his purpose that "the old man" would throw him out in five. But they lost their money, and after twenty minutes had passed and he still remained with the chief, the betting ceased. The case was unprecedented and the chances too long for the most reckless gambler. Nearly half an hour had elapsed before the door opened and the visitor reappeared and, a thing to be whispered, was escorted through the main office by the Olympian himself! Some surmised, but these were accounted blasphemous, that had it not been for his beard a smile might have been detected on those majestic lips.

That evening Margaret observed unusual symptoms in her father. He let his soup get cold while absorbed apparently in a calculation too great for mental arithmetic, for he drummed with his fingers on the tablecloth until she had to draw his attention to it and entreat him to stop. He then pushed his fish aside and, calling for paper, proceeded to write something which looked to Margaret like an epitaph, around which he drew a careful square, ruling the lines with the back of a knife. Stranger still, after a most uncomfortable meal, he accompanied her to the piano and actually stood there while she sang, wagging his head in profound appreciation, though, as she was well aware, he could not hear a note.

At last he drew a deep breath, stretched himself nervously, and retired to a chair.

"Come over here, Meg!" he said.

She seated herself on the arm of his chair and he put his arm round her.

"I'm proud of you!" he exclaimed.

She kissed him affectionately and told him not to be silly.

"Oh, yes, I am!" he insisted. "And I'm going to show the world! I'm going to have a big party, all the best people; big singers, too. We'll have one or

two performers just to set you off, and you shall sing to them and—what do you say?"

He twisted her round to watch the effect of his words on her face. Her lips were parted, her eyes gleamed with excitement.

"But can I? Am I good enough?" she cried wistfully.

"Sure you are!" He laughed away her apprehensions.

"I'd love to do it!" she exclaimed.

He pulled a piece of folded paper out of his pocket.

"I was designing an invitation at dinner," he said with an air of modesty which revealed the importance he attached to it. "I want it to be distinctive."

"Oh, let me see to that!" she cried hastily. "These things mustn't be too different, you know."

He looked a little crestfallen.

"Well, I don't want just an ordinary thing any one might have," he protested. "I fancied a neat floral design—daisies, marguerites, you understand—"

He broke off, seeing the look of horror in her eyes.

"But there! You know best. You choose the thing. But I'm asking the best people, you understand—young Crinling, and he's a nephew of Mundus; they'll come, and all that set."

"I didn't know you knew them!"

She could not bring herself to say "they don't know you," which was actually the way the thought shaped itself in her mind. He stroked his beard gravely.

"I shall though, this day two weeks!" he said.

She gladly accepted his injunction to go ahead with it.

But an unexpected obstacle presented itself in Signor Pozzi's peremptory refusal to allow her to sing.

"In a few months I say 'yes.' Then we explode you before all New York.

But not now—a little puff before a few pigs! Bah!"

Her face fell. The more she had thought about it the more she had set her heart on the affair. For a year she had worked conscientiously without any stimulus but an occasional compliment from her master. She wanted a little wider recognition to encourage her in continued effort. If she would be good enough in six months to sing professionally she was surely good enough to make a favorable impression on a private audience. Besides, she wanted to impress Mark; for she had decided that he should receive one of those formal invitations and be present in that distinguished audience, with whose applause still ringing in their ears she pictured herself descending from the platform and graciously obliterating his stupidity in the atmosphere of her triumph. And now this little tyrant, Pozzi, was going to prevent the realization of her dream. Her eyes filled with tears.

"No, no," murmured Pozzi, tenderly reaching out for her hand. But she was in no mood for his sympathy.

"It's very unkind of you," she exclaimed, drawing back a step, "to discourage me! You do nothing but discourage me."

He wrung his hands.

"I!" he said. "I, who adore the sound of your voice? I build greater for you than these ignoramus."

But the castle he was building lay too remote to be of any consolation. Still, Pozzi was her master and his word weighed more than another's. She carried his veto to her father.

"I'm afraid I shall not be able to sing at the party," she said.

Mr. Laidler looked deaf.

"I shall not be able——" she began again.

"Yes, yes," he interrupted. "I can hear. Why not?"

"Signor Pozzi says I mustn't."

"Mustn't? Pozzi?" he repeated. "I want you to sing. Tell him that!"

Which dismissed the subject for that night.

Whatever hope there might have been of reconciling these mutually exclusive authorities was rudely dispelled by a letter received by Mr. Laidler from the master himself. The crucial sentence of this document read:

My pupils are taught to lift their eyes to the future and not to ogle the well fed.

Taken from their context the words seem ruder than their author intended them to be. But it is the weakness of strong feeling to tear things from their proper environment, to see disproportionately. Signor Pozzi had meant to convey that Margaret was too precious to be wasted prematurely in a private exhibition. Mr. Laidler missed it.

"Tell that fellow," he said, "that this audience will be the best any singer could hope for. I don't care *who* the man is! And further, I don't wish him to write to me except in reply to letters of my own."

Undignified as she felt the position to be, Margaret delivered her father's message, in a modified form indeed, but the effect was none the less pronounced. It kindled the little man's egotism into a blaze of fury.

"Because he's rich!" he shouted, pacing the studio with short, fat strides, "he thinks to frighten me!"

"But it doesn't matter, maestro," Margaret tried to soothe him, "I'll sing if it pleases daddy."

"I do not want you to sing! I forbid it!" wailed Pozzi.

"But father insists," she said.

"Choose, then!" He struck a dramatic attitude. "It is between him and me."

Her pretty brows darkened with wonder.

"There's no question surely," she remarked, "of anything of the sort?"

"There is, there is!" he cried.

"I'll do what daddy wishes, and, of course, I'll still study with you."

"No!" He stamped his foot. "You cannot serve art and authority, God and mammon, Margaret!"

His voice lingered on the syllables of her name so significantly that she caught her breath and the color mounted in her cheek.

"Yes," he murmured, seeing her embarrassment. "The time has come. They have forged it upon us. And you know at last. I see the blush which proclaims it. Your heart is awake. But I knew from the first—you were so fresh, so adorable you did not understand—but at the first glance of you I saw in a flash our two lives."

She could only stare blankly at him in mute astonishment, could not resist even when he drew near and took her hand.

"Now we will go away," he said, "and in secret we will prepare the wonderful mystery of your voice."

Suddenly she snatched her hand away.

"We will do nothing so absurd and ridiculous!" she cried. "Oh, how can you be so silly!"

A scream of terror, an angry rebuff would not have outraged his dignity as these few half-indignant, half-contemptuous words. He drew himself up to his full height, until, indeed, he was fully as tall as she.

"Am I to believe?" he began.

"It's too ridiculous," she interrupted, the laughter breaking through her annoyance. "I didn't think you could be so absurd."

His hand went to his breast pocket, and out came the leather case containing her letters.

"What do these mean then?" he asked spitefully.

"Why——" she began, and broke off in horror as his implication dawned upon her.

"Ah, yes," he sneered, taking the letters out and unfolding them. He read:

Thank you, dear signor, for your marvelous kindness. Never before have I had such sympathy. I can never forget it.

"I didn't mean——" she interrupted, but he waved the letters before her.

My very dear Maestro, if ever a man helped a woman to visions of delight——

But Margaret would hear no more.

"I know," she cried. "But you know perfectly well that the letters don't mean anything. How *could* I mean anything? I was grateful to you for encouraging me and teaching me. I thought you admired my voice."

"You have let me kiss your hand. You have heard me tell my love."

"No, no!" she exclaimed. "I didn't understand it that way. I thought you admired my voice, I thought all artists behaved that way. It's all a mistake."

"Yes," he shouted with an insolent sneer, "it is a mistake, your voice! You said it! I'll say so! You sing? Never! If you sing and any one listen—I am ruined. 'My God!' they will say. 'Who has let her do it?'"

The vulgarity of his spite jarred her more for the moment than the hard sentence on her voice, and she responded with some dignity.

"Then you have been cheating," she said after a pause. "You have been taking money for training me when you knew all along that I was not worth teaching!"

"Ten dollars!" he snapped his fingers derisively.

"You charged my father twenty; but that's not the point. You have pretended to me that I should sing some day at the Metropolitan, and all the while you knew in your heart that a dollar a lesson would be money thrown away. You wretched liar!"

"I loved you——" he tried to insinuate, but she silenced him.

"Ring the bell!" she commanded.



With a sweep of his clenched fist Mr. Laidler annihilated the cellist. "It's off!" he shouted. "Read this!"

"If you want your father to know about it," he threatened, "I can show him your letters."

She advanced so swiftly upon him that he fell back. She pressed the button. The dour attendant appeared.

"My coat, please!"

The woman stood motionless, staring at Pozzi, who strutted over to the window and discovered a lively interest in the street. Margaret repeated her request. The woman actually smiled.

"Good-by, I suppose," she said with a nod toward Pozzi.

Margaret was conscious of a freezing sensation in her spine, but recovered sufficient spirit to repeat her demand for her coat in a voice which hardly faltered. The woman retired with a smirk on her face.

"You will still tell your father?" asked Pozzi vindictively.

Margaret disdained to reply.

"Because not everybody will believe such innocence."

The woman reappeared, and he returned to his investigation of the street.

The best course would have been to take the whole story to her father, but this was a counsel of perfection of which she at once admitted the justice and dismissed the possibility. It is difficult to extract a sympathetic hearing from a deaf man, and her relation with her father had always suffered from this disability. Sympathy depends rather on intuitions than the spoken word, but where the nuances of expression are excluded by one party's inability to catch them, the habit of intuition

cannot be formed. Margaret found it hard enough to face disillusionment without the ordeal of shouting it into insensitive ears.

Moreover, she could not venture on the subject without involving Pozzi in Mr. Laidler's wrath, which would provoke recriminations which she preferred to avoid. She had but a dim idea of the power of the blackmailer, but while her letters remained in Pozzi's coat she was in no hurry to improve her knowledge by empirical research.

Which considerations would have troubled her less had she not formed on the strength of Pozzi's taunts a particular aversion to singing. It was out of the question that she should attempt it now. She had no more faith in her powers, no ambition to display the talent she could not claim now to possess. But she could think of no way of escape, and the days were going rapidly by and with them the opportunities for a miracle which might save her.

One hope remained, desperate enough and involving a further sacrifice of pride. One morning, three days before the date of the party, she caught up the telephone and rang Mark.

A person, she reflected, may for some good object sacrifice her pride; still one does appreciate it if the other person keeps up the pretense of it for one. Mark's voice, she could not help thinking, was a little more cheerful than was becoming one who had lain so long under the ban of her displeasure. Still there was comfort in the confident ring of it, and the alacrity with which he obeyed her summons did something toward restoring her spirits.

She received him in her boudoir, a room so luxuriously furnished by her father that she was uncomfortable in it. Since the debacle of her aspirations, too, she had come positively to dislike it. The piano, the leather-bound music in the Sheraton shelves, and the signed portraits of so many musical celebrities,

in whose goodly fellowship she dared no longer hope to be enrolled, all tended to depress her with the sense of her failure. Still, Mark had never been inside it; it might impress him with the urgency of the occasion.

He entered with his usual air of tolerant irreverence, selected a comfortable chair, and disposed himself comfortably therein. He seemed to accept his presence there very casually, thought Margaret.

"What do you know?" he asked.

She handed him cigarettes in a silver box, but he waved them politely aside and, producing an ordinary packet from his pocket, lit one with as much coxcombry as if it had been a special blend in coroneted paper.

"The party!" she exclaimed.

He gave a knowing look.

"Ah!" he drawled. "I thought it might be about that. I don't know how far you've been let into the secret, but no doubt your father has told you what we've accomplished."

"Oh, don't be so self-satisfied!" she cried. "There's going to be a big change in the program."

"You know, then?" he asked. "Antonietti is going to play!"

He sprawled complacently out in the chair.

"No, no!" said she desperately. "I wish father had never started this idea at all."

He bounded up in astonishment.

"I must say!" he protested. "You're pretty hard to please, Peggy. I thought you wanted to sing so much. Well, you'll have to go through with it now. The old man is dead set on it and I've got all manner of wonderful people coming to it."

"You!" she said. "What have you to do with it?"

"I like that!" he complained. "I suppose your father never gave the credit where it belonged. It was my idea from the start, and I've collected half New

York to come along. And you didn't know!"

He sat down again, displaying ineffable disgust.

He looked so exactly like a big, unhappy boy that Margaret was torn between two desires, to smooth his hair and to slap him. She compromised with a reprimand.

"You had no right to interfere!" she said.

"I wish you knew your own mind," replied Mark gloomily. "You were sore with me for not appreciating you, and then when I try to make friends again by going to all the trouble of getting up an enormous show for you, you turn round and jump on me for interfering."

She felt a dangerous impulse to soften at this confession. It was sweet of him to want to make friends, and after all he had had a better opinion of her voice than he had confessed if he wanted to hear her in public—better, she supposed, than it really deserved. But at the same time his confession revealed her strength and she must make use of it to extricate herself from her predicament.

"Well, you've got me into this fix and it's up to you to get me out of it," she said. "You quite see what a silly thing you've been and done, don't you?"

Of course he did not see, and she was obliged to tell him what Pozzi had said, only there was no necessity to disclose the matter of that gentleman's passion.

Mark reflected for a moment.

"All right," he said briskly. "We've three days before the show. I'll tell Mr. Laidler that you've changed your mind. He'll be a bit disappointed, but he'll see reason."

"No, he won't," retorted Margaret. "He wants me to do it."

"But you can tell him you've got a headache."

"A headache for three days? Don't be ridiculous!"

"Well, don't tell him until the day!"

"That wouldn't give him time to make other arrangements. How can you be so mean? It wouldn't be fair. Besides he'd know it was a lie."

"That sort of lie doesn't matter in society."

"You don't know father. Besides, the old dear wants me to do it, and really I would, if I could. But now I know I can't and I must be saved from it, and it's up to you to do it, Mark."

"Right. I'll fix it," he said suddenly. "Cheer up!"

He actually shook hands with her as he left. Since this was a ceremony they had hitherto omitted she wondered whether there was any significance in the pressure he applied to her fingers; for he held them long enough for her to prepare herself—their faces were close together—for any supplementary rite he might think fit to perform. But he abruptly dropped her hand and made for the door. There he turned and with unusual diffidence observed:

"I would do anything for you."

With which he disappeared.

Later he rang up to say that his interview with Mr. Laidler had proved unsuccessful, but that he had one more shot in the locker of efficacy of which he would inform her next morning.

Her father confirmed Mark's report. Margaret had had no idea of the importance he attached to the affair, but now in exposing the weakness of his social ambition he revealed the strength of his determination to go through with his plans. Not but what he was kind and considerate enough, but he only laughed at her misgivings, said he understood that all artists felt the same way before a performance, and that it was a good sign that she had the right stuff in her. So, far from being moved from his purpose, he was more than ever convinced of her success.

The appeal unto Pozzi clinched the argument against her.

"Don't quote that man to me!" shouted Mr. Laidler. "He's a fool. Wait until these people hear you!"

Next morning Mark arrived with a face betokening further disaster.

"I thought you had another shot in the locker," said Margaret despairingly.

"I had!" he confessed. "But I fired it and missed."

"Oh!"

"I went to Pozzi's," resumed Mark, "to get him and your father together."

"You didn't!" She held her breath in an agony.

"But it was no good. He's gone—beat it—to Canada!"

Margaret breathed again.

"Why?" she asked, as coolly as she might.

He looked searchingly at her. She turned crimson.

"Mrs. Pozzi was there, packing."

"Mrs.!" She realized for the first time the atrocity of the little man's proposal. She felt sick.

"She worked as attendant there. Potts, their real name, is English, but as she said, no use for a singer. She was up to the ears in a packing case. She's going to join him in Canada. She wasn't much upset. Apparently Potts is always doing this, falls in love with his pupils and runs away, sometimes with them, sometimes away from parents."

His eyes were still steady on her face. "I never thought he was married," she murmured.

Why she should feel so guilty she could not think; perhaps the way he was looking at her made her feel self-conscious. It was a great relief when he took her gently in his arms.

"Don't worry!" he said. "I'll look after you in future."

"You seem to think it was I," she said. The fact that he was right was no excuse for drawing an inference from such slight data.

"It must have been you," replied

Mark. "There isn't anybody to compare with you. Who else could it have been?"

She was on the verge of capitulating; she must use her power while it lasted.

"But this doesn't help me out of the concert!" she cried.

"That doesn't matter. Will you marry me?"

"How can you be so callous? I can't think of anything now."

"Will you, after the concert?" He held her still.

"Do you mean you'll calmly let me in for it, after all? How dare you propose to me at such a time?"

"Well—will you?"

"You're a brute!"

"I don't care. I want you. Will you?"

"No! Not till you get me out of this fix you've got me into. No, I'm certainly not going to trust myself to a man who can't keep his promise. Let me go!"

The command was superfluous, for Mark suddenly released her and strode to the door.

"All right!" he thundered. "You've put it up to me! You wait!"

For a second she feared she might have pressed him too hard. What if his parting utterance contained a threat?

Mr. Walter Crinling was dressing for dinner. His man was inclined to refuse Mark admittance, but hearing his former army captain's voice, Crinling emerged from his dressing room and dragged him in. The interview was short. Crinling was struggling with an indomitable shirt and later with a refractory tie, so that Mark had an uninterrupted field of conversation. His business was concluded before Crinling had adjusted the matter of the tie, and Mark returned to his own apartment in a state of tremendous though suppressed excitement.

Next morning he went downtown a full hour before he had intended.

Mr. Laidler had not arrived. Mark hung about in the street outside until he was afraid he should attract police notice. At eleven his patience was rewarded by the sight of the big green car and of Mr. Laidler alighting therefrom. He waited another ten minutes and entered the office.

He had not expected to be received so promptly, and was hardly able to rehearse the manner he had in the watches of the night proposed to adopt in Mr. Laidler's presence.

"I just called about the cellist," he began. "He wants——"

With a sweep of his clenched fist Mr. Laidler annihilated the cellist.

"It's off!" he shouted. "Read this!"

Mark's eyes danced so that he could hardly see the paper or read the message it conveyed. But he knew the substance only too well. It was important to remember that he must appear surprised.

"Well, I'll be—well!" he muttered, handing back the telegraph forms.

"Crimling!" exclaimed Mr. Laidler. "The damned puppy! 'Regret that unforeseen circumstance prevents my coming on Thursday next.' And Mundus! Does he think I'm a fool to believe a yarn like that? 'Must beg to excuse nonappearance on Thursday. Unfortunate error.' Error be damned! It's been got up. It's a plot between them."

"Oh, no!" Mark found spirit to interject. "I don't think it can be that."

"Well, if they don't want to come," continued Laidler, "the whole affair is off. If it isn't good enough for them, it isn't good enough for me! Pickard!"

An agitated clerk appeared.

"Are all those notices sent off?"

"We are doing them as fast as possible, sir. We shall be in sight of the end by lunch time."

Mr. Laidler dismissed him with a nod.

"Isn't it a bit high-handed?" asked Mark. He felt he could take liberties

with his luck since it had at last begun to run his way.

"I don't care," returned Laidler. "They can't treat my invitation like a casual cocktail party. I'm through with the lot of 'em."

He pushed his swivel chair back to its limits and, thrusting his thumbs into the armholes of his waistcoat, glared at the ceiling.

"But I was thinking, does Margaret know?" Mark surprised himself with his own craftiness.

"Gee, no! I forgot that!" Mr. Laidler jerked back to the vertical and reached for note paper. But Mark intercepted him.

"I'll go and break it to her," he suggested. "She'll be a bit upset."

"I'll leave it to you," said her father, glad perhaps to resign so delicate an office. And Mark fled hastily away.

He found Margaret on the point of leaving the house.

"Come back!" he said mysteriously. She followed him into the hall.

"It's all right! I've done it!" he cried.

"You mean?"

"You won't have to sing!"

"Oh!" she cried in a transport of relief. "You clever old darling! However did you manage it?"

He shook off the question as a lion shakes its mane.

"Now!" he said in a great voice.

"What about it?"

She stood motionless, even when he came and put his arms round her.

Later, when they were in a mood to remember such sublunary things, she questioned him again, and again he was able to avoid answering by means of a pleasing diversion of which she had lately granted him privilege; and so long as it remains efficacious, so long will the secret of young Crinling's intervention in her affairs remain between that accommodating gentleman and Margaret's husband.

Crossed Wires

By Jessie A. McGriff

ILLUSTRATED BY H. T. DENISON

In which one gets a little glimpse into the heart of a woman in love, and certain crossed wires are untangled.

SHE had never cared especially for any man, though many men had seemed to care for her and to express their care in varying degrees of fervency. Life had been full of so many pleasant things that she had not bothered her head about the man whom, in the natural order of things, she might marry. And now, after reaching the full flush of her womanhood, she found herself dominated by thoughts of a man who expressed no desire to marry her.

For over a year he had been paying her spasmodic attentions which both piqued and puzzled her and which left her in a state of constant conjecture as to whether his apparent reserve was inherent or merely the glaze of an achieved self-repression, or, again, whether his bearing belonged to an apathetic nature in search of moderate diversion. They were very compatible, and when he came he often seemed loath to go. In fact, on one or two occasions she was compelled to remind him that she reserved the early morning hours for sleep. Then a longer time than usual would elapse between his visits, and when he did come he would appear rather stiff and formal.

She often lay awake nights wondering why she couldn't get him off her mind. Then one day she forced herself to face the stark truth—she thought about him because of the painful pleasure of it and because she couldn't help herself.

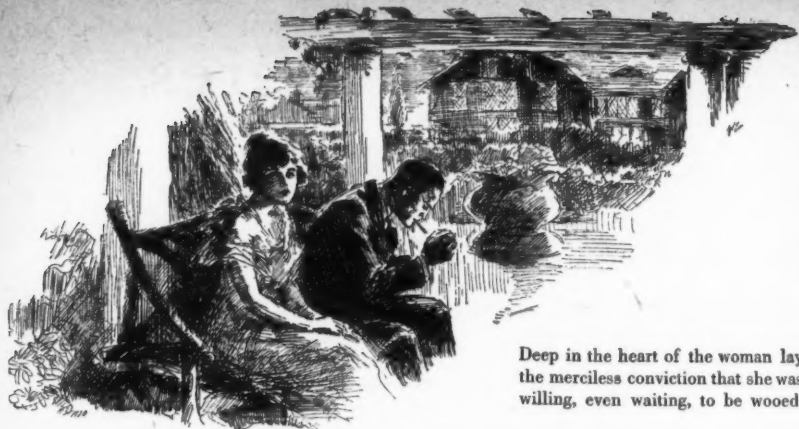
He had not been near her for several

weeks, and life, in the interim, had become a very dreary thing. But when she heard his quick, staccato step on the graveled walk one evening all the color came surging back into her drab world. What though her pride demanded that she greet his return with indifference? She knew that her eyes were so glad and shining that she dare not look him in the face.

It was rather sultry indoors, and, by mutual consent, they stepped out on the porch and strolled to the pergola in the garden and sat there on a rustic seat. Apparently they had very little to say to each other, yet her heart was full of a thousand things which the years had quietly stored there to be shared with the man she loved—when he should demand to hear them. But he sat impassive and self-contained, his only visible interest in the constellation of Orion overhead. When the filmy scarf she wore slipped from her shoulders, he adjusted it with the calm precision of a dry-goods clerk, while she shrank back in panic lest he note the tremor which shook her at his touch.

"May I smoke?" he asked.

"Please do," she replied carelessly, but she longed to strike the weed from his lips. That he should think of smoking on such a night! The full moon had slipped behind a velvety black cloud and fringed it with fire. The warm fragrance of wisteria blossoms, rioting over a trellis, was poignantly sweet. There were little tremulous noises and soft,



Deep in the heart of the woman lay the merciless conviction that she was willing, even waiting, to be wooed.

delicious breaths against their faces. The air was quivering with all those subtle witcheries which should tempt the normal man to woo. And deep in the heart of the woman lay the merciless conviction that she was willing, even waiting, to be wooed.

She hated herself because of it and longed, with helpless desperation, that he might somehow sense her distress and leave her—or else, understanding, stay.

But he smoked on in placid content, removing his cigar now and again to give monosyllabic replies to her rambling observations. Never had he seemed more hopelessly indifferent to her. She was therefore taken by surprise when he turned suddenly upon her with:

"Why do you permit me to bore you like this? I saw you attempting to stifle a yawn just now. Candidly, now, don't you wish I'd make off with myself?"

"Oh, no," she hurriedly assured him. "No, indeed. I wasn't yawning, really"—for in truth she was only pretending to—"I always enjoy you—your society," she ended lamely.

"So far so good. Then you must be troubled over something. You seem unlike yourself. What is it?"

"Nothing—that is—well, yes. I suppose I am, since you ask," she confessed nervously.

"Anything I can help?" His tone was gravely solicitous.

She smiled enigmatically.

"You could—and you couldn't."

"I don't believe that. If I could, why I can; and, if I can, I will—if I may. Now tell me." He tossed aside his cigar and bent toward her. His kind, calm profile, his absolute poise, and utter unconsciousness of her inward tumult aroused in her an overwhelming desire to shout out her misery to him and force him to share, if only for a moment, the utter unbearableness of it. She held her breath sharply, fearful lest it escape in a sigh like a school-girl. So much is expected of a woman. Must she always repress?

He shot her an amused glance.

"I'm waiting," he reminded her.

"But," she half whispered, as if speaking to herself, "it wouldn't be fair to the girl afterward."

"Nonsense. I assure you I have the admirable faculty of transforming myself at will into a bedpost, and, if it would ease your mind, I think you might tell me."

"But you see, when the girl came

to discover that I'd given her away she would be horribly distressed."

"I'm certain she wouldn't mind," he smiled, entering instantly into her mood as he sometimes could. "Not if she could understand about the bedpost; and, for that matter, why should she know you had spoken to me at all?"

"Oh, she'd know. Trust her for that. She often reads my mind. You see, we're very close to each other, almost like sisters. When she came to realize what I'd done, she'd want to murder me. You see, what appeared a perfectly normal confidence yielded at night, might, in broad day, appear a horrible indiscretion. And she's so sensitive, and yet she's terribly honest—almost insolently honest. And she's proud, too. If you could only know the *kind* of pride she has. You see, she has always met things fair and square, without evasion, and now to think that she must skulk about anything—and pretend. That is really what's almost killing the poor thing."

"I should say! How old did you say she was?"

"I didn't say. But she's old enough to know she's in a fair way of making a fool of herself."

"How harsh you are! I don't believe you are as fond of her as you make out. By the way, is she pretty?"

"Well, I couldn't say she is pretty, although I have heard persons who really cared for her say she was beautiful. Her looks, however, are all a matter of taste, so we needn't discuss them."

"At any rate, she sounds interesting. I wish I could help her out some way, but I'm helpless so long as you keep me in the dark as to what's really troubling her. Suppose you begin at the beginning."

She looked away in an agony of indecision.

"If I tell you about her"—she at last plunged in hurriedly—"it's because I've

reached the place where I'm powerless to advise her. No woman could advise her, anyway. It would have to be a man, and that's why I'm tempted to speak of it to you. Women don't know how men feel about such things, really. They only know what tradition and convention and textbooks on feminine behavior have to say about them: 'How a young lady ought to behave,' and all that. And my girl isn't a young lady. She's a woman, with flesh and blood and feelings and a heart, all combined into tricking her into making a simpleton of herself. Oh, it's shameful!" She pressed her clenched hand against her cheek.

"Oh, no," he protested. "Nothing could be shameful about so human a person. I'm beginning to like her tremendously. Tell me more. Begin at the beginning, as I suggested, and tell me how and what and when. By the way, do I know her?"

"You've met her, but I'm sure you don't know her. If you did, I shouldn't have to be telling you about her. You see, the simple fact is that this—this girl of mine, without rhyme or reason or the slightest encouragement, has fallen in love with a man. At least, she fears she has. She can't sleep nights for thinking of him, and her men friends bore her, and her women friends irritate her. Nothing seems to matter any more except his coming and going. Often when he looks at her, her heart pounds in her side in a horrible manner, and instead of being bright and attractive and fascinating when he's around, she's as dumb as an oyster. Isn't that the way people—even quite sane people—often behave when they're in love? Or do you know?"

He laughed quietly.

"Oh, yes, I know well enough. I should pronounce this a pretty bad case. I should say that beyond doubt she loved him to distraction."

She stiffened visibly.

"Nothing of the sort—that is—I'm sure you're mistaken. I believe she really hates him—his smug airs, his self-sufficiency, his general torpidity. I'd as soon love a totem pole. He's like a sphinx, set as the hills. Sometimes—she tells me—she'd like to strike him, hurt him as she is hurt! But she knows he's too thick-skinned even to feel the blow. How could a woman love a man like that?"

"Heaven knows! He must have the sensitive, high-strung temperament of a jellyfish! What she can see in him is beyond me."

"But, you see," she defended eagerly, "he's quite charming in spite of all I said. And he's dear and good. She's certain of his goodness and fineness under all the rest, and that's why she wishes he'd go off where she'd never lay eyes on him again. But he won't. He just sits in the middle of her life like a big bowlder in a little stream and dams it all up. She can't get around him or over him, and he won't be absorbed. So what's she to do? Shall she tell him to stay away because she can't bear the sight of him, and then break her heart if he goes?" She stopped and stared straight before her, completely absorbed in her vicarious self-analysis.

For a long time the man sat very quiet, then he slowly drew out his handkerchief and wiped his face.

"You seem to take it terribly to heart, this case of—of—your *friend*!" he said huskily.

She turned her passionate face away from him and her hand fluttered to her throat.

"Yes. You see, I'm really very fond of her. I—it hurts me to see her so defenseless. Sometimes I—I—just can't bear it for her. Don't you see?"

"Yes, I see a great deal," he said slowly, his eyes on her shaking hands. "I see probably more than you intended

I should." His meaning was unmistakable. "I'm sorry."

"You don't mean that I—that she —" She raised her eyes in half-veiled entreaty.

"Yes, I do mean that. It was stupid of me not to have seen sooner, but I was so full of something else."

"Oh, I see. I'm sorry I interrupted your train of thought." A short, cruel silence fell between them; then she said, as if the words were forced from her mechanically: "Then there's nothing further to say about it."

"May I not say how proud, how grateful I am because you told me? I deeply appreciate your confidence. I only wish I could advise you somehow, but, you see"—he smiled ruefully—"as it happens, I'm the last person you should have come to for advice."

"Are you? Why?" she asked dully.

"Hasn't it occurred to you that a man might be—well—a little prejudiced in such a matter? That he might, for instance, prefer to speak for himself?"

She flinched.

"I see. I thought you were broader than that, more sympathetic. I must seem very crude. But, you see, this is the first time in my life I've had to cope with conventions. I mean that perfectly normal, ordinary living has always seemed sufficiently joyful to me and exciting until recently. Please believe that I hadn't meant to let the cat out the bag quite so clumsily. To-morrow, I suppose, I shall realize even more acutely how dreadful it was to let you know. But to-night it seemed quite simple and natural and right. It seemed that I couldn't bear the burden of it alone any longer, and that I might share it with you in a sort of detached way without your knowing exactly who was involved. But now you do know, I suppose I shall have to feel ashamed of it as long as I live." She covered her face with her hands an instant, then stiffened her quivering chin.

"But I won't be ashamed of it!" she exclaimed fiercely. "I'm proud of it. Love is love, and being a woman doesn't change it. I prefer to let you know rather than to drop hints, as I've seen some women do, intrigue, and maneuver, and set their traps. Oh, I've seen them! I've watched their games, with their mothers behind them pushing things on."

awkward situation I've placed myself. If you have any regard for me or respect or any chivalry you'll forget what I've said to-night. You must understand that any further discussion of the subject must be extremely painful to me. Shall we go in?"

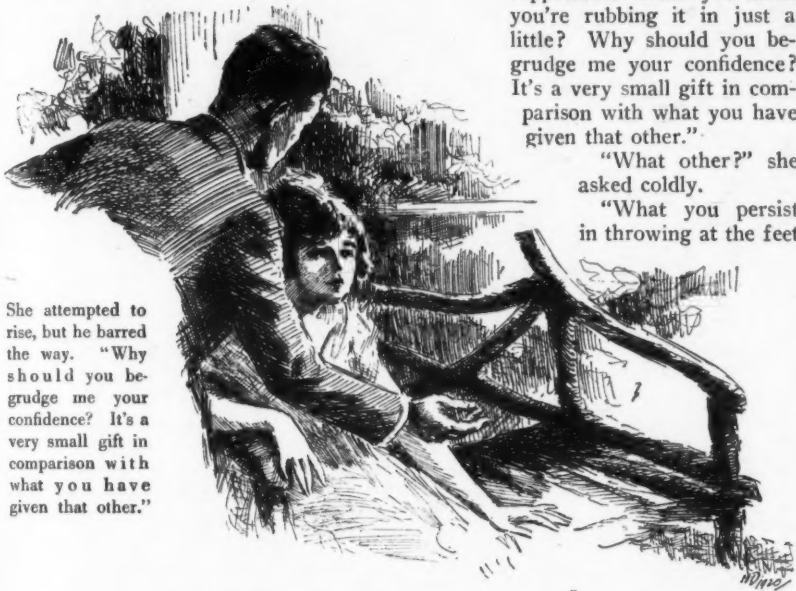
She attempted to rise, but he barred the way.

"Wait!" His voice was curiously suppressed. "Don't you think you're rubbing it in just a little? Why should you begrudge me your confidence? It's a very small gift in comparison with what you have given that other."

"What other?" she asked coldly.

"What you persist in throwing at the feet

She attempted to rise, but he barred the way. "Why should you begrudge me your confidence? It's a very small gift in comparison with what you have given that other."



He rose and stood stiffly in front of her.

"My dear woman, how can you think for a moment that you've done anything you need feel ashamed of? Can't you permit me the miserable satisfaction of feeling that I'm the sort of man a woman *could* tell a thing like that to?"

She gave him a queer look.

"If the knowledge of my—my unhappiness brings you misery, how can it afford you satisfaction? Only a coxcomb could find satisfaction in such a situation. I see now clearly in what an

of a man who has neither the appreciation or capacity to see the value of!"

"Thank you. You put it very delicately." She attempted again to rise, but again he barred the way.

"Let me go," she said. "I can't stand any more. Don't you see how insulting you are?"

"I don't mean to be in the least, but since confessions are in order, suppose you listen to mine. You would have discovered it for yourself, if your attention had not been centered elsewhere. You asked me a while ago if I knew

what it meant to be in love. I do. I've known quite positively for a year or more. I've been fool enough to imagine that I might make *you* care for *me*. To-night"—he laughed shortly—"I meant to ask you to be my wife. Somehow I took it for granted from the very first that we were meant for each other. I was so sure of it that it never occurred to me there might be some one else. Egotism, I suppose. Even yet"—he bit his lip and clenched his fist—"even yet I can't realize that you're not to belong to me, that you're breaking your heart over a pig-headed, stiff-necked—"

"Wait!" She stared up at him with parted lips and dazed eyes. "With me—*me*? In love with *me*? But if what you say is true, why have you been so reserved about it? Why didn't you tell me? How could I guess?"

"Well, you see, I wanted to be sure, sure of you and of myself and sure of my finances. A man thinks of such things after he's out of his twenties. He can't help it. By that time life has taught him that in justice to all concerned he must look before he leaps. These past few weeks I've stayed away from you because I've been closing up a deal, an awful strain, but I've come out ahead. I was in a position to ask you to-night and I meant to. Somehow or other I felt quite satisfied that you knew all along how it was. I thought women always knew those things, intuition and all that. Queer, isn't it?"

She stretched out her hand toward him, and as quickly withdrew it—

"Yes," she breathed, her chin quivering. "Oh, yes, terribly queer, as you say. But I'm awfully glad you've told me."

The muscles at the side of his mouth twitched painfully.

"Oh, well, it's neither here nor there now. Misery loves company, and I couldn't help letting you know how it was with me. But it doesn't make it any easier to talk about it. I'm just the wrong man, that's all, so the best thing I can do is to clear out and leave you. You've trouble enough without my boring you with my disappointment."

He picked up his hat and turned to leave her, but stopped short at a choking sound. She had buried her face in the crook of her arm upon the back of the bench, and her shoulders were shaking convulsively.

He bent over her.

"Dear girl, *don't*," he begged. "Brace up. He isn't worth it. No man is."

At this she became almost hysterical.

"He is worth it," she gasped. "*He is!*"

"All right, then. Just as you say, only I can't bear to see you cry. There now, there—" He laid his arm impulsively about her shoulders, then awkwardly withdrew it. "I—I wish to Heaven I might comfort you."

She stretched out her free hand and, groping for his arm, replaced it about her shoulders.

"You may—you *must* comfort me," she said.

You will be sorry if you miss

"Values and Vivian"

By Dorothea Brande

in next month's SMITH'S.

Another story worth waiting for is

"The Dummy"

By John Lawrence Ward

in the May number of SMITH'S.



New York Stage Successes

"Enter Madame"

A comedy of temperament.

By Gilda Varesi
and Dolly Byrne

BEING the husband of an internationally famous, restless, romantic opera singer, subject to her whims and her vagaries, her tears and her tantrums, obliged to relinquish the comforts of home life for the pleasure of carrying a pet poodle in her train throughout the capitals of Europe—all this may have its fascinations. But Gerald Fitzgerald, much as he has adored his charming Lisa, has tired of this "colorful but snatchy life," and has finally come to long for his own fire-side and the ministering hands of a woman. Having, therefore, written to Lisa asking her to divorce him, he proceeds to cultivate his friendship with Mrs. Flora Preston, a blond widow of comfortable habits, who comes in from her apartment down the corridor to pour his breakfast coffee.

GERALD: On time to the dot! By Jove, I can't get used to it! You're a miracle, Flora. If you had come floating in at the window, or had shot in through the floor, it wouldn't be more wonderful to me than to have a woman keep an appointment on time.

FLORA: You poor, darling boy! Such a life as you must have had!

GERALD: This is awfully good of you to put yourself out like this to give me breakfast.

FLORA: No trouble at all. I have only to cross the corridor. Do you take nothing but coffee for breakfast?

GERALD (*pacing nervously up and down*): Can't eat. Coffee is a stimulant, you know. I have to have it. I am in such a state.



Gilda Varesi, co-author and leading woman in "Enter Madame."

FLORA: There, there—nothing to get worked up about. Flora is here now.

GERALD: You make a lovely picture sitting there.

"But well thou playest the housewife's part!
And all thy threads with magic art
Have wound themselves about this heart."

FLORA: Oh, Gerald! Did you make that up about me?

GERALD: No, but the poet who wrote that was a lucky devil. He was half starved all his life, but he had a wife who stuck to him and starved with him.

FLORA: I suppose John must be more like his mother than like you. You know the artistic temperament crops out, like drink or insanity. I've noticed it before in John—never on time, and his taste in cravats!

GERALD: Oh, well, he is young. Wait till

By Courtesy of Brock Pemberton, Producer.



Norman Trevor, who plays the rôle of the husband,
Gerald Fitzgerald.

he gets through college before we criticize him too severely. After all, he's a manly, likable chap, though Heaven knows we were never very congenial. Before he gets here there are some things I feel I must tell you. When I wrote Lisa to ask her to divorce me, I told her that she wouldn't suffer financially, that if she let me go without a fuss, I'd see she was well taken care of. Now, there's the difficulty. That's one of the things we've got to face, you and I. Lisa is a most expensive person.

FLORA (*startled*): But, my dear, she must make heaps of money.

GERALD: God knows what she does with it! She never has a cent put away. She calls on me to make up the deficit at least twice a year.

FLORA: You mean to tell me that a prima donna as popular as she is doesn't earn enough to pay her bills!

GERALD: Lisa is one of the best-paid prima donnas in Europe, but she's generous, lavish, she has the taste of an Oriental, she—well, she's Lisa! Wait till you see her. I don't know, Flora, whether you have any conception of what my married life has been. To be hustled continuously about the world, to be forever readjusting one's digestive apparatus to the atrocious cooking of a dozen different nations, to spend one's waking

hours in the foyers of hotels and amid the maddening babel of the back-stage regions of opera houses, to use one's home only as a coaling station or dry dock, and to be free not even then from the trillings and tootings and mi-mi-mi's of the prima donna and her musical entourage who hover about her and are at once atmosphere, press agents, and Greek chorus. Divorce has always seemed a detestable, crude thing to me, a sort of public acknowledgment of failure and defeat, and yet I know, Flora, that you, with your womanly heart, will see that the failure was not altogether my fault. Marriage, of course, is a game, but it's not solitaire.

FLORA: Yes, I know, Gerald dear. I am sure it wasn't your fault.

GERALD: But this is what I started to say when the memory of the past twenty years unlocked my tongue: As soon as we see Lisa and I arrange this thing harmoniously, I am going to fix a substantial marriage settlement on you, so that you will be provided for, no matter what happens.

FLORA: Oh, Gerald, how generous of you!

GERALD: Nonsense! And now, if you don't mind, you may give me a kiss.

FLORA: Dear, silly boy—there! (GERALD'S son, JOHN, accompanied by his brand-new young fiancée, ALINE, enters suddenly. JOHN'S manner is stern with disapproval. GERALD and FLORA move guiltily apart.)

GERALD (*furiously*): You'd no business coming in like that! I told you last Christmas that you'd no business coming in like that—and here you go and do it again! How dare you! How dare you disobey me?

FLORA: It isn't the same thing. Remember of whom you are speaking. There's never been a breath against my reputation. What a dreadful situation! (*Starting to leave*) That's what I get for doing a kindness.

GERALD (*laying a hand on her arm*): Wait, Flora. John, this is Mrs. Preston, the lady who has done me the honor—Well, ah—my future wife.

JOHN (*astounded*): I say! What about mother?

GERALD: I am coming to that. That's why I asked you to come home before the end of the term. I've got a lot to say to you. But look here—where are your manners? Ask Aline to sit down.

ALINE (*timidly*): Oh, I am so sorry! I—please, I must be going.

GERALD: Perhaps it would be just as well. You see, all this has an 'explanation that's as plain as the nose on my face. You mustn't speak of it to your mother yet; it's premature. Your family wouldn't understand—

JOHN (*bitterly*): I'm glad Aline came along. She might as well know what kind of a crazy family she's marrying into.

GERALD: Whom's she marrying?

grams. As usual, she won't write if she's within reach of a cable. Not even the news I had to give her could shake a letter out of her.

JOHN (*romantically*): It's her warm heart. She loves to know that what she feels reaches you as soon as possible, warm from her fingers, as it were. Lord! Governor, how can you treat her so?

GERALD: Yes, the warmth of her fingers



Mrs. FLORA PRESTON (Jane Meredith): You mean to tell me that a prima donna as popular as she is doesn't earn enough to pay her bills!

JOHN (*proudly*): Me.

GERALD: *You?* Rot! Rot, I tell you! Why, you aren't old enough to earn your cigarettes.

JOHN (*with great dignity*): I'm old enough to understand that my fiancée ought not to be here. Come, Aline.

GERALD: Here! Sit down, the two of you. Aline might as well know now as later. Your mother is coming home!

JOHN (*sarcastically*): Indeed!

GERALD: Yes—I'll read you the cable-

has to come by cable. Mighty little warmth has reached me otherwise. You know nothing about it, you young romancer.

JOHN: Well, she has her profession, hasn't she? If you loved her, you would stay with her.

GERALD (*resentfully*): Well, I have my profession, haven't I?

JOHN: Never saw you break your neck over it.

GERALD: Much you know about it. I work like a dog.



Aline (Sheila Hayen)

John (Gavin Muir)

Mrs. Preston (June Meredith)

Gerald (Norman Trevor)

GERALD (*furiously*): You'd no business coming in like that! I told you last Christmas that you'd no business coming in like that!

JOHN: Never saw a dog work yet.

GERALD (*angrily*): Do you want me to be the husband of the prima donna, and to carry her poodle through all the capitals of Europe? I've done it enough. Never again!

JOHN: You should have thought of that before. This is an insult to my mother. It puts her in a damnable position.

GERALD: There you go off at half cock! You don't know anything about it. How can you understand the feelings of a grown man? I want a home. I want my own fire-side. I want to see my slippers toasting by the hearth when I come in after a hard day's work. I want the ministering hands of a woman.

JOHN: Rats! You are tired of mother and you want a change—why don't you say so?

GERALD (*losing patience*): There, you see, Flora. What's the use!

FLORA (*tenderly*): Never mind. You

can't expect him to understand all at once. It's natural—devotion to his mother.

JOHN: She's my mother, and I'll see she gets a square deal!

GERALD: Who wants to give her anything else?

FLORA: That's right. Everything will come right if we keep calm. Read the cables.

GERALD: Yes, here they are—all concise and away off the point. But I've gathered that she intends to come home. The first is from Madrid: "Oh, my Gerald! These golden autumn days mock the misery in my eyes. Lisa."

JOHN: You see, she's broken-hearted. I won't stand for it. Do you hear?

GERALD: Hear them all, and then judge. This is the next: "Spain. Land passionate and ascetic. The night long I danced until the Duke of Alva stole my slipper. Lisa." The next came from Barcelona: "I fled the opera in Madrid quite at once in the mid-

dle of 'Salve dimora.' The turmoil of my flight rumbled behind me in the silent streets. A mob like angry bees sought me in vain. I found peace on a tall ship that rocked. Lisa."

FLORA (*calculatingly*): Mercy, what a long cablegram! It's a dreadful waste of money.

JOHN: She's the most wonderful woman in the world. I can read right through to what she was thinking and suffering when she sent those cables.

GERALD: I don't believe your mother's got a heart when the music stops.

ALINE: I think she's a darling. How did those foreign officials ever get those cables right?

GERALD: She probably stood over them

with a stiletto. Madame doesn't like to have her effects spoiled.

ALINE: It's very beautiful and poetic, but what does it all mean?

GERALD: Trouble, undoubtedly. All Madame's most strenuous arguments are conducted in vers libre. (*A servant brings GERALD another message.*) Here you are—another cable! "Arriving. Steamer *Mongolia*. In my heart is peace and blessings for all. My arms are filled with roses. Lisa."

Almost immediately, in the midst of a tremendous bustle and confusion, and a jargon of French, Italian, Russian, and Japanese, comes Madame Della Robbia's entourage—her physician, her



BICE (Madame's maid): Bring here immediate portmanteaux Number Two—Fifteen—Twenty-two. Bring here and open them on the floor.

secretary, her maid, her cook, followed by porters laden with baggage, and the thump, thump of many trunks being unloaded outside. Boxes filled with luxurious trappings are opened, and Gerald's severe bachelor apartment is quickly transformed into a setting appropriate for the charming Italian prima donna. Gerald looks on ruefully while his books, his pipes, and tobacco are swept aside to make room for Madame's flowers and photographs and Oriental curios. When the last cushion and screen and drapery has been arranged Madame Lisa makes her triumphal entrance. She is quietly dressed, but her mouse-like exterior covers a multitude of moods. At sight of her son, she stands for a moment trembling with emotion, then wordlessly flies into his arms.

LISA (*drawing away to gaze at him fondly*): Johnnie! My little Johnnie has become a man! (*Dramatically*) Ah, how the great earth must sigh as the generations rush by like a mighty wind and drop, as the wind drops at sunset!

JOHN: Gee! It's great to have you come, mother! I'll tell the world! You always knock us off our feet. You look ripping! Ripping! Doesn't she, Aline? This is Aline, mother—Aline Chalmers, you know. (*Significantly*) It's Aline, you know!

LISA: What a child! As blond as daffodils, and my John so dark, so Italian! (*Putting their heads together*) One, two! Yes. One! Two! Just as one groups flowers. Such beautiful two! Child, speak—I want to hear the timbre of your voice.

ALINE (*shyly*): I don't know what to say.

LISA: Ver' light soprano; perhaps it will grow. Say: I love you.

ALINE (*in a sweet, trembling voice, as she turns her face up to JOHN*): I love you. (*Lisa nods approvingly, and turns to look at GERALD for the first time. She raises her hand and he takes it.*)

GERALD (*quietly*): Lisa, it's always the great day when you come.

LISA: Is it, my Gerald? Then I must rejoice that I have come so far! Two such big men and one little woman. Why did I stay away so long? My Gerald's hair grows gray and our boy has become a man!

GERALD: Don't take his six feet to heart, my dear. I couldn't very well keep him in

short trousers till you came, but I'm quite young enough to do for both.

LISA (*dramatically*): Life has rushed by me like a swift wind, and the sound of my voice singing silly little tunes has deafened me to the rush of its passing. Oh, of course, I forget! This is America. Here, when the heart speaks, the lips say, "Fine weather we are having." Ough!

When her physician interrupts to insist that Madame must have absolute rest, she protests, but at last consents to take a sleeping potion. "I take the medicine, doctor. I promise most faithfully," she says, as he reluctantly leaves the room. Then, looking about for a place to pour the unpleasant dose, she discovers an enormous "floral piece," topped by a white dove, which Mrs. Preston (Gerald's future wife) has sent her.

LISA (*horrified*): *Madonna mia!* Gerald, did you bring this thing for my grave?

GERALD (*apologetically*): No, Lisa. Mrs. Preston, the lady of whom I wrote you—

LISA: Ah, so! I see. She sends a peace offering—the little dove. She is subtle, this lady!

GERALD: My dear girl, you will twist things your own way! She just wished to be kind, to welcome you—that sort of thing.

LISA (*looking at the floral piece and drawing her own conclusions*): Ah! That sort of thing. Gerald, it's wonderful. It's as if she stood in the room. (*Shivers.*) So that's who she is!

GERALD: Nothing of the sort. She was in a hurry. She probably bought the first thing she saw. To me it looks like a naive, but warm and sincere, impulse.

LISA: Mine was an impulse warm and sincere. Did I make a mistake to come? Are you glad to see me?

GERALD: To see you has always been my delight. The trouble is, I haven't had enough of it to keep me from starving.

LISA: And from now on you wish to die of starvation?

GERALD: Oh, no! That's not my intention. Just to try some other kind of nourishment.

LISA: It will not agree with you; rather heavy fare. That's what puzzles me, Gerald. So she looks like that! Until now your amourettes were more like a series of hors d'œuvres—

GERALD: Lisa, this lady—well, I tried to explain in my letter; it's a difficult thing to



"ENTER MADAME!"

Madame Lisa della Robbia returns to her home after some years absence abroad.

say. You see, my life with you has been colorful but snatchy. It has been more like the experience of a playgoer. At intervals the curtain came down, and I left the theater of your presence always regretful, always eager to come again, always with the sense that it wasn't real and could not be expected to be real—and that was the fun of it and the charm of it—but it's an awful pace to keep up. Frankly, I don't see how you do it!

LISA (*sadly*): Now you no longer like to go to the play. It is October in your life. The landscape glows and the sun is still

warm, but the evenings are chilly, and you like to sit by the fire *en famille* in your slippers. And the lady of the dove will sit opposite in that big chair, which she will completely fill—

GERALD: That doesn't appeal to you, does it?

LISA (*passionately*): No!

GERALD: Well, there you see—Lisa, I am no more blind to-day than I ever was. I know that you are the most fascinating woman in the world.

LISA: Thank you. (*With sudden resolution*) That makes it easier for me to tell

you my little story—the real reason for my coming—

GERALD (*curiously*): What now?

LISA: Your letter arrived at a most opportune moment. I also have met a man not too young, not too old—not as old as you, not as young as me. Just right, you know. He is a great poet; no money he have, no jewels to bring to me—just his heart and his poems he lay at my feet.

GERALD (*in disgust*): A poet, a spring poet! Oh, Lisa! Come off. I don't believe a word of it.

LISA: You do not believe! You, then, are the only one who has yearnings. You are tired of romance; you sigh for quiet, for peace, for old slippers! What have I to do with these things? For years you leave me all alone. I am Lisa della Robbia, who is always young. I starve for romance, for poetry. Now I find it and I take it; you can have the old slippers. (*Striking a pose*

of exaltation) I am the Della Robbia! Love is my master and my slave. I am young as eternity, old as the moon, wise as the stars!

GERALD (*angrily*): Stop, Lisa. Stop acting. Sit down and listen to me, or I'll make you. (*Relentlessly*) You're a conceited, middle-aged woman, whose career is on the wane. You never were a beauty at any time in your life. You've been spoiled and petted; self has been your god, and you've served him well. Oh, you've had your fill of fame and glory, and what was our part—John's and mine—in your game? You know how we yielded to your whims, and how I've cared for you, and even now—God help me!—I can't stand quietly by and see you make a fool of yourself. A poet—bah! Look, I'll show you something. (*Holding up a mirror and pushing back her hair*) You are growing old, Lisa! There's too much rouge here, too much make-up, too much trouble to gain

your effects. How dare you speak of poets, of romance? You're growing old, Lisa—old, I tell you, old!

LISA (*utterly crushed*): Am I so very old, Gerald? Too old for you to love, too old to love you?

GERALD (*relenting*): Yes, it is good to love you, and it's not half bad to kiss you, either. I dare say that's all you want. I tell you, Lisa, it isn't that I'm not grateful to you. Why, you've been the most exquisite, magnificent, the most ideal mistress a man ever had!

LISA (*drawing back in horror*): Gerald! (*Furiously*) This is too much. Gerald, I'll never forgive you the longest day I live! Very well, then. Divorce, divorce—you shall have it! Oh, I wish I had it here



GERALD: Lisa, I am no more blind to-day than I ever was. I know that you are the most fascinating woman in the world.



LISA: He is a great poet. No money he have, no jewels to bring to me—just his heart and his poems he lay at my feet!

now, that I might throw it in your sneering face! Go, go, go! I don't want to set eyes upon you any more.

Dismayed by Lisa's relentless fury, Gerald leaves. A tremendous paroxysm of rage shakes her from head to foot; then she bursts into a passion of tears. Catching sight of Mrs. Preston's unhappy floral offering, she sweeps it to the floor. The crashing sound brings her maid, her doctor, her cook, her secretary, and her son, who gather around her in anxious distress.

JOHN: Mother dear! Mother!

LISA: John! John! He has broken my heart! I only wanted to be loved. What is it I have done to deserve all this! (*Pausing to drink a dose the doctor presses upon her*) I must rest. Oh, what a face I must have! Do I look old? Oh, Madonna, do I look very old! Bice! Send for some one—a facial massage, a hot bath, a masseuse, presto per l'amor di Dio! (*Springing up*)

Johnnie dear, it is check, but not yet check-mate! This is war but not defeat!

Through long weeks of moody days and nights Lisa nurses her wounded heart. Her manager meets with a refusal when he tries to see her, nor can he make any arrangements for her concert tour. Gerald alone holds her interest, yet when Gerald calls she refuses to see him. Bice, Madame's excitable, motherly maid, expresses her anxiety to the other devoted attendants.

BICE: Oh, you all—you don't know her as I know! These last two weeks I sleep in there. Every night she go to sleep on my breast like a child. "Bice," she say, "perhaps he come back to-morrow." Every night she say, "Perhaps he come back to-morrow, Bice." And I say, "But Madame refuse to see him when he come." "Perhaps he come anyway," she say; "perhaps he break in the door and cry: 'My Lisa!



MADAME LISA: Gerald has broken my heart! I only wanted to be loved.

The sun is gone out of my heaven since Lisa is gone out of my life!"

Gerald, who has finally given up his attempts to see Lisa, and has established himself at his club, obtains his divorce. Lisa's son and the others are planning how best to break the news to her, and what her future course shall be, when Lisa enters, smiling brightly upon the mournful little group.

LISA: *Guarda quanta gente!* Johnnie, don't look like that; no matter what is happened, you must not look like that. Never! *(Turning to her secretary)* Miss Smith—out, out! You know I cannot bear to wait; I never wait! What is, what is, what is? Quick!

MISS SMITH: The first decree of divorce.

LISA *(wistfully)*: He did not break in the door! *(Then, observing the faces of her troubled friends, with a sudden flash of tenderness)* My dears and friends, how lucky I am to be so blessed! *(Trying to*

get her arms about all of them) *Cari tutti*, thank you. *(Resolutely)* Now we need calm, strength, thought. It is not all over—oh, no! Please go—open a bottle of wine, Archimède—all drink my health. *Da bravi—via coraggio!* I will be alone with my son. *(Turning to JOHN, heartbrokenly)* He did not break in the door.

JOHN: You are an amazing woman, mother. You never do what's expected of you. I wish I could help you, mother dear. Can't you accept Weissman's concert offer? It would take your mind off things. Wouldn't singing help you to forget?

LISA: Oh, no, John dear! Music vibrates in the memory. My life with Gerald is so closely woven through with song that if I were to pluck my Gerald out, the rest would fall in little heaps of ravelings all about. Oh, I could not bear to sing!

JOHN: What are we to do, mother?

LISA: That's it—that's it. What are we to do? I have thought of many things. I've thought of many ways to win him

back; but he's not like other men. He pricks my little bubbles. He'd say: "Come off, Lisa! Come off! Don't act." And what am I to do?

JOHN: It doesn't seem to me it's any use thinking of romance now. I'm not quite sure it would be dignified. See him once, shake hands with him quietly, say that—that you hope he will be happy—

LISA (*eagerly*): I'll wear my black velvet trimmed with chinchilla. (*There is a knock at the door, and GERALD is admitted. He has come in the hope of making peace with LISA that they may part friends. He apologizes for his brutal remarks, but blunders again.*)

GERALD: I was so beastly about your age—as if you could help it!

LISA (*resentfully*): Gerald, be careful what you say. You know you are not my husband any more! I must have respect for men that are not my husband.

GERALD: Good heavens! I don't know what I'm saying. I was so afraid you'd slip away without my having another glimpse of

you. You look lovely and exquisitely young to-night—

But Lisa, cool, aloof, friendly, seems indifferent to all Gerald's compliments. He is piqued by her coolness, then amazed and delighted when she suddenly invites him to supper. "But," she stipulates, "you must bring the nice lady you are to marry." Gerald hesitates, but is at length persuaded to go for Mrs. Preston, while Lisa excitedly hastens to dress and to arrange for a delightful party in honor of Gerald's wife-to-be.

GERALD (*introducing the two women*): Mrs. Preston, Madame Della Robbia!

LISA: Delighted! It was so good of you to come.

FLORA: It was charming of you to ask me.

LISA: Not at all—just a little family supper. You belong in the family now, you



LISA: Do you realize, you cold blocks who go to the opera, the soul that we burn before you? The melody pours like incense smoke from the censers that are our hearts!



Madame Liau rises to the occasion by giving a dinner party for her successor.

know. I don't know yet just exactly what relation we are to be to one another, but something, surely. My English is so shaky. Wives-in-law, is it not?

FLORA: I couldn't say. What an idea!

LISA: Well, at any rate, I feel sure that we should not be strangers. We have so much in common now.

FLORA: I hear you are to be married again, Madame Della Robbia. Gerald told me of your wonderful romance with a poet.

JOHN: What's that, mother? You never mentioned it to me. Now that father's gone, you ought to advise with me, you know.

GERALD: Dash it all, don't talk as if I were dead!

LISA (*calmly*): I don't know what you mean. I have my parrot to swear at me, my dog to snarl at me, and my cat to stay out all night—what for do I want a husband?

The little supper party is a gay one, but so reminiscent of the good times he and Lisa have had together the world over that Gerald begins to regret the picturesque life he is losing. Lisa has never seemed more fascinating, nor Mrs. Preston more stupid and pettish. In the midst of the festivities Madame Lisa's manager telephones his last appeal for her South American tour. In her usual impulsive fashion she decides to take the boat for Brazil the next day. The party breaks up in excitement.

FLORA: Good night, Madame Della Robbia. Such an unusual evening! I am very grateful to you for it. I've never seen anything to equal it in all my life—quite extraordinary.

LISA: Is it really so extraordinary? Perhaps you think *me* extraordinary.

FLORA: Oh, dear me, yes! But I suppose you have to be like that. If you were not, people wouldn't pay so much money to see you on the stage.

LISA: To myself I seem quite simple. It's very puzzling.

FLORA: I suppose it comes from throwing yourself into every part you are doing. You throw yourself out of joint, as it were, and you end by not knowing how to behave at all. However, I am delighted to have met you. I understand Gerald so much better now. I am glad to have had a glimpse of your vivid domestic atmosphere. You are so very original. I dare say you make a business of that. You have behaved most

becomingly, on the whole—really amazingly well.

LISA (*meekly*): Thank you, so much.

FLORA: The situation might have been very unpleasant. Two women squabbling over a man, you know—oh, dreadful! Instead, it's been only the question of righting something that has been wrong for many years. Men are such helpless dears that we women must take these things into our own hands. Of course, we won't be likely to meet in the future.

LISA: Not unless you allow me to give Gerald away at the wedding.

FLORA: Mercy, what an idea!

LISA: You've just said what a poor, helpless thing he was—the dear! Fancy how dreadful if he lost his way going up the aisle, and left you there waiting while he wandered around the pews! If I were there, you could trust me to keep a grip on him and hand him over firmly at the proper moment.

FLORA: Oh, well! I'll trust to his love to bring him safely to me. In the meantime I'll leave him in your care. Don't let him tire you. Send him home soon. Good night! (GERALD sees FLORA to her door and returns to LISA.)

GERALD (*tenderly*): Lisa, I don't care to have you change your way of living. I always want to be quite at your service financially, you know.

LISA: Oh, money! Gerald, I haven't thought of it for years!

GERALD: That's right; just go on not thinking of it. When your money gives out, send the bills to me.

LISA (*firmly*): No, I can't do that.

GERALD (*angrily*): You only do it to be irritating and contrary. Once you discover that a certain thing will give me happiness, it is always the one thing you refuse me.

LISA: Now it is my fault again! Gerald, I have not forgot what you said to me the day I came back—that I have been only a magnificent mistress to you—

GERALD: Oh, Lisa! I would give anything to wipe out the words I said that day. I can't imagine what made me—Gad! I know; I remember now why I said it. It was the damned poet you were going to marry. What's become of him, Lisa?

LISA: There is no one. There never has been any one. Is there anything else you wish to talk about?

GERALD: No, no, I suppose not. I must go. Good-by, then. Good-by, Romance, Youth, Adventure; as wayward as my thoughts, as graceful as my dreams, as changeable as my desires; a butterfly with



FLORA: Of course we won't be likely to meet in the future.

LISA: Not unless you allow me to give Gerald away at the wedding!

wonderful wings, and with emotion instead of a heart.

LISA: It is a lie, a lie, a lie! How dare you, how dare you say such things to me? (*The telephone rings and GERALD attempts to soothe the jealous MRS. PRESTON with promises to leave soon.*) Poor Flora—how old she is! We are young, Gerald, you and I, because we have imagination, illusive, because we still see all the people as they are not! That's the secret of youth. Yet the world insists upon imposing age upon us, because it is respectable. We are the hope of the world, if they only knew—the irreconcilables. But once again the world has won and you are going to join the great phalanx of the old!

GERALD: The hell I am! Come here. I'll show you if I am an old man!

LISA: Oh, shocking! Don't dare to come near me! (*Retreating around the piano*) Listen, I will play you a beautiful exit.

GERALD: Stop that noise—stop that infernal noise, or I'll make you!

LISA (*still playing*): The great god Pan is dead.

GERALD: Stop it, you little fiend! Come here to me. (*Seizing her*) Oh, Lisa! Lisa, darling, what shall we do? I've been a fool, and now what shall we do? Do you love me, Lisa? Tell me that you love me!

LISA (*tenderly*): Poor Gerald!

GERALD: What in Heaven's name shall we do?

LISA: I can't say, Gerald. I can't help you.

GERALD: Oh, it isn't too late! Is it too late?

LISA (*as he takes her in his arms*): I seem to hear the sands rushing out—it is almost too late.

Next morning Lisa's attendants, finding Gerald's hat still on the piano, draw their own conclusions. They rejoice

in the happiness that has come to Madame. Bice has just finished decorating the breakfast table with orange blossoms when Gerald, dressed in his evening clothes of the night before, enters gayly. He is followed by Madame Lisa, in a fascinating negligee, beaming with joy, as they sit at table.

BICE: My signora is happy at last. The saints be blessed!

GERALD: How will you like settling down in America, Bice?

BICE: Eh, what is?

LISA (*enthusiastically*): No more opera, Bice. I have decide' firmly! You and me, we raise chickens. (*Turning to GERALD*) Into your dear hands I place my life. I have no strength, no will but yours, my Gerald.

GERALD: My darling, my beloved, my wife! Of course, I don't expect you to give up everything. I'll let you sing from time to time at a few special performances at the Metropolitan—

LISA (*wheelingly*): Once in a while at Covent Garden?

GERALD: Well, yes, once in a great while.

LISA: And at Milan—they would never forgive you if you didn't occasionally let me give them *Lucia* or *Traviata*. How they adore my *Dinorah*! Just occasionally, is it not so, my Gerald—

GERALD (*protestingly*): Well! Look here, darling—

LISA: Oh, no! No! Not unless you wish; only when you wish—perhaps never.

This blissful reunion is interrupted by Mrs. Preston, who comes to corroborate her suspicions. In reply to her wrathful tirade Gerald stammers apologies, and for once Madame Lisa

is bereft of words. A little later comes Madame's very proper son, John, who is scandalized to find his father—in evening clothes—breakfasting with his mother. He informs them that Mrs. Preston has called in reporters, and that the lobby downstairs is filled with them. The telephone begins ringing insistently.

LISA (*excitedly*): I answer. I better answer. 'Allo! Yes, it's me. Who wants? I can not receive. At this hour? Impossible! What? Oh! I have no story for the press. My husband is not here. How dare you— What business is it of yours? (*Stamping her foot in rage*) How dare you! How dare you! How dare you! (*Hangs up receiver. Phone keeps on ringing.*)

JOHN: We are disgraced! Oh! Oh! Oh!

GERALD: Shut up! Look here, I can't answer that phone. You do it, sir. Tell them to shut up.

LISA: Answer it, Johnnie darling,

please! Be careful what you say to them. My publicity depends upon them.

JOHN (*in phone*): Yes, yes—yes! It's all a misunderstanding. I am her son. Yes—it's wrong; you've got it all wrong. Well—well—Mrs. Preston is wrong—she—she—she is joking!

GERALD: You infernal idiot!

JOHN: Well—what am I to say?

LISA: Go downstairs, John. Tell them—tell them— Oh, I don't know, but get them away!

JOHN: First, send father away; it isn't proper. You aren't married! Don't you remember that you were divorced yesterday?

LISA (*startled*): Oh! Oh, yes! I had forgot. We both forgot. (*The telephone*





The farewell concert. Mrs. Preston is disturbed by Gerald's interest in Lisa.

rings again.) Oh, John! Tell them you are coming down to them! John, John—we'll do anything you want.

JOHN (to his father, sternly): Now, I've stood enough from you. You answer one question for me. Did I ask to be born? Did I ask to be born? Answer that.

GERALD: We gave you the gift of life.

JOHN: No, that's no good. That won't work nowadays. You tell me if it's right to treat me like this, when I never asked to be born. I didn't choose you to be my parents. God knows I've got to put up with you and you've got to put up with me. You can't go on and live as if I weren't here. You've got to think of me and of my future and of the dignity of the family—the dignity of the—dignity of the family, do you hear? First, I want to see father leave this house.

LISA (amused): Well, go, Gerald. Go through the bedroom—so they won't see you.

GERALD: Well, I'll be— (But he goes, and LISA turns to her son.)

LISA: There—there—he is gone. Now you go, my darling, and save the family honor! It rests with you.

JOHN: All right. I will. (Exits.)

LISA (recalling GERALD): Gerald—Gerald! Come—I know, I know what we will do! We'll elope to South-America!

GERALD (delighted): Right you are! Can we make it?

LISA: I'll send Miss Smith to Weissman. They will keep the steamer waiting as long as possible. We run with only a few things—the rest of the baggage will follow later. Miss Smith! Bice!

BICE (rushing in): Where is the rouge? Ah—eccolo! Eccolo! Presto, presto!

LISA: My attar of roses—I left it about. I cannot elope without my attar of roses! We run by the back door! Here, Gerald, you hold Toto!

GERALD (rebelliously): Look here—I won't carry the damn' dog!

LISA: Gerald!

GERALD (suddenly realising his position): You are making me do everything I swore I'd never do again! Here you go off to sing and drag me along and make me carry that fool dog again. I won't do it!

LISA (anguished): Gerald—Madonna mia! We can't leave Toto.

GERALD: You can leave me then!

LISA: Oh, Gerald—Gerald! Not again! (The telephone rings; there is the sound of many voices in the hall.)

LISA (terrified): Oh! Oh! Take Toto!

GERALD: Oh, all right! All right! Run! (They rush out excitedly.)

BICE: Exit Madame!

The complete play, "Enter Madame," in book form, handsomely illustrated, has just been published by the Putnams.



A LITTLE BOY WITH WIND-BLOWN HAIR

SOFTLY stealing through memory's haze

Out from a tangle of yesterdays,
Where the sunlight falls on the meadow there,
A little boy with wind-blown hair,
Waist-deep in the grass and clover stands,
Grasping the blossoms in two fat hands.
Now a sudden smile lights up his face—
The flowers are dropped for a butterfly chase;
And then he comes bringing his spoils to me—
There's a mist in my eyes; I cannot see;
For the boy will stand there never again,
He has gone to the Land of Grown-up Men.
But often, when tired, in the twilight dim
I sit by the window and think of him,
And see in my mind that picture fair
Of a little boy with wind-blown hair.

IDA M. THOMAS.



The Buckaroo

By Mary Carolyn Davies

ALL the fights that man has fought from the days of the cave and fire,
All the skill with which man has bent the world to his desire,
All the fever and hate and power surge and seethe anew,
In the same old way with the same old force, in the blood of the buckaroo,
As inch by inch, with never a flinch, hurt, but with never a groan,
He takes his fall, but after all, bends the broncho's will to his own.

The wild horse never has known the feel
Of a master's hand or a master's heel,
And panic makes him a frenzied thing,
And he tries to wriggle and swerve and fling
The clinging burden under his feet,
As the cowboy struggles to keep his seat.

Sometimes the broncho wins, and the man
Must lose, as he has since the world began.
But the next in the saddle, is he haunted
By the death of the last who tried, or daunted?
Look! past the rails of the corral
That cowboy laughs as if Life, his pal,
Never had thrown him down before!
And he "fans the brute," and yells, as sure
As if victory were a sinecure!
Oh, you of the quirt and the cigarette,
Prove that Death will be branded and gentled yet!



S. Weinstein's Special

By R. O'Grady

Author of "Her Own," "Common Carbon," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY HAROLD DENISON

A game of double cross.

THE gaudily pink-globed electric bulbs which reinforced the feeble daylight in their "three-in-one" apartment glared down upon the couple as they stood tensely facing each other.

A breakfast of toast and coffee was growing cold upon the table. He had flung the meal together in the kitchenette while she was dressing to go to her work at Weinstein's, applying an artificial make-up which only detracted from her still unsquandered legacy of youthfulness.

Her husband, though likewise youthful, was coatless and unkempt. His hands and clothes were stained with the traces of toil. His feverish gray eyes looked distraughtly out of a face which had grown haggard with desperate resolve.

The girl, whose chic costuming would easily identify her with some fashionable ready-to-wear emporium, seemed to have acquired stolidity.

"Let's eat," she suggested almost lightly. "You'll be late to work. I'll be late, and if I'm going to get that raise out of Weinstein——"

To her surprise, the man complied. He sat down detachedly. She poured her coffee. He poured his own, slopping it recklessly on the polished table, which bore the scars of other hasty breakfasts. She made no comment on his carelessness. His coat was still hanging over the back of a chair. The corner of a long envelope protruded

from an inside pocket. She eyed it covertly. He must not get out of the house with that—that counterfeit money. She recognized the soiled yellow envelope, and had no doubt of its contents, although she had begged her husband to destroy it when Jim Keller had slipped it to him at the shop. Jim had got rid of it for self-protection. He had been dabbling in the green-goods business, and the cops had been after him. Since he had never called for his jeopardizing property, it was very likely he had got in jail—*jail!* That was what was sure to happen if—— She must sneak it away from her husband somehow, for how would it better things to commit a crime—to get in jail?

He gulped a swallow of black coffee and set his cup down with a click.

"Well, what are you going to do about it?" he demanded in strident challenge.

She started, turning her gaze intently in the opposite direction from the coat.

"About what?"

"Everything; the raise in the rent for this—this"—he threw out his hands in audacious contempt of the place he had at first regarded with awe and pride—"this cell we stay in?"

"Oh!"

"Well, how're you going to pay fifteen more a month? I knew I was all kinds of a dam' fool to take a place at thirty-five, and now fifty!"

"We got to do it," she asserted,

doggedly self-convinced. "Flats are scarce; that's the reason rents are raised. We can't find any cheaper. Besides, you needn't call this a 'cell.'"

She took a rapid inventory of the ultramodern appointments which had come to be necessary to her daily life. How could she dress for Weinstein's without the full view of herself, from wavy auburn marcel to gray pumps and silk stockings, which the mirrored door reflected? And how would she find time to make up the disordered bed which that same door shut safely out of sight? Or wash the dirty dishes stacked away from week-end to week-end in that last word in apartment condensing—the kitchenette?

"This ain't a cell," she reiterated with no betrayal of warmth.

"No, it ain't a cell," he echoed bitterly. "It's a place for folks that's too proud to live in a shack and too nice to rent housekeeping rooms of dagos. It's the place you"—he half rose from his chair, glaring across the table at her—"the place you sold our baby for!"

She stiffened, her face going hard and white as chiseled marble, except for the rouge. Then the hot color flamed, defying the rouge.

"Sit down, Ray Brooks," she commanded in a rigid little voice. "If I didn't know you was crazy mad, you couldn't talk like that. Sit down!"

He dropped back into his chair.

She waited a brief, hypnotic spell, as if to get control of both herself and him.

"Dorothy's a lot better off with mamma than she ever was anywheres in this town," she resumed with her former calm finality. "Besides, they won't take 'em any more in housekeeping rooms, so you needn't harp on that."



"Sit down, Ray Brooks," she commanded in a rigid little voice.

"Won't take 'em any more!" he decided. "Then what do they do with the poor little duffers? Hang 'em out on the telephone wires?"

"They don't have to take 'em. They can get plenty of renters without kids."

"Oh!" He began to laugh, a wild sort of laugh, which stopped abruptly, while the glitter in his gray eyes was softened by a mistiness hinting almost of tears. "Poor little duffers," he repeated, "poor little Dorothy." Then, bringing his fist down on the table with a blow that jingled his cup and spoon: "This is a hell of a town! I'm going to chuck it. I'm going to have Dorothy and a little home and you. I don't care how I get it!"

"You're not going to do anything wrong, Ray Brooks. It won't better things to—to commit—" She checked herself, watching him, intent and breathless, as he got up abruptly from



"No, it ain't a cell! It's the place—the place you sold our baby for!"

his chair and began piling the dishes with a reckless clatter.

Could she? It was her only chance. As he disappeared within the kitchenette with his clattering load she darted from her chair, snatched the long envelope from his coat, and slipped from it a crisp new bank note, which she wadded into the top of her gray silk stocking.

Hurry as she might, she had scarcely time to get into her wraps before he emerged from the kitchenette.

As she dodged out into the corridor, jerking on her plucked rat "seal" coat as she went, he followed her to the door of their suite, with the empty envelope crumpled in his hand.

"Leona! Lee!" he called savagely, and then, baffled, drew in his head and slammed the door.

The publicity of the common hallway protected her. Yet, as she emerged, breathless, half running from the front exit, she reflected with dismay that hers

was only a partial victory. She had rescued but one of those tormenting counterfeit bills. Where was the other? Had it slipped from the envelope? Of course, she would make quick work of this one, as soon as she found a place to burn it. But Ray—he might find the other and get into trouble, after all!

Mr. L. Weinstein, manager of S. Weinstein, Ladies' Coats, Suits and Ready-to-Wear, had arrived at business extra early to line up his forces for the great post-holiday slaughter sale of winter coats and furs. Pa-

trolling back and forth through the padded aisles of his fashionable sales parlor, fat, lavishly groomed, and emanating an odor of hair tonic mingled with strong cigar, he halted now and then to give brusque orders to salesgirls.

He was progressing toward the front of the long room, where were stationed the picked saleswomen of the establishment, those possessing the qualification which Mr. L. Weinstein was pleased to term, somewhat vaguely to himself, as "personality." What it really meant to him was ability to sell the goods.

In circling a reel of his most elegant coats, Mr. L. Weinstein all but collided with a whisking young woman who emerged from the opposite side.

The young woman recoiled. Mr. L. Weinstein stopped in his tracks, which was all that could be expected of him. He gave the young woman a fish-eyed stare.

She at once recovered that quietly

impersonal manner which had ever been a puzzle to Mr. Weinstein. He could not tell whether it was natural, or skillfully applied, like her marcel or her rouge. He "should worry," however. She made a swell appearance—stylish. She could slip into a \$35.00 coat and make it look like a \$79.98. She had brains about getting herself up, that young woman. She knew how to dress her own curly red hair so it would take an expert to tell it from the "permanent wave."

These, and similar mental processes, Mr. Weinstein indulged apropos of this enigmatic young woman. But he gave no sign of them in his fish-eyed stare.

"Good morning, Mr. Weinstein," murmured the young woman.

"Good morning, Mrs. Brooks," conceded Mr. L. Weinstein. "Was there somet'ing?"

This question because she made a gesture to detain him as he was about to resume his progress.

"You got these here \$355.00 fur coats tagged 'Special \$439.50, marked down from \$485.00,'" she informed in her casual way.

"Sure," he nodded, "and you should watch out for them \$355.00 red tags yet. Don't leave any sticking around."

"But you've marked them up?"

Her rising inflection, slight as it was, seemed to imply something more than a matter of arithmetic.

Mr. L. Weinstein wrinkled his fat forehead in an effort to lift his brows.

"Shouldn't I know what I done?" he retorted. Then, bethinking himself of the success of the day's business, he enlarged:

"Look here, Mrs. Brooks, that three-fifty coat didn't hit 'em last week. It wouldn't go. A lady that buys that grade of coat wants to pay more for it, understand? They turned up their noses at the price. You should seen that—poof! At \$459.50, marked down from \$485.00, they'll eat 'em up!"

During this exposé of the psychology of her sex, Leona Brooks stood regarding Mr. Weinstein with intent, speculative eyes.

"Well, of all things!" she commented, still enigmatically to Mr. Weinstein.

"Poof!" repeated Mr. Weinstein, a bit more explosively, spreading forth his fat, well-manicured hands for additional emphasis. "Those ladies, you got to put it over on 'em or they don't buy. They're afraid of somet'ing too cheap. You got to fool 'em. Next week we give a big bargain, mebbe. We even it up." With a shrug as he turned away, "We don't make not'ing."

The nonsignificant skirmish with his saleswoman had been replaced in Mr. L. Weinstein's busy thoughts by matters of main importance when, a half hour later, he glimpsed that same young woman making a bee line for his desk.

Mr. Weinstein proceeded with the opening of his mail, slitting the envelopes as incisively as might be with his thick forefinger. It was still early in the day. Bargain hunters had not yet raided the store. Yet the manager seemed driven. He piled up bills with an air of forbidding preoccupation.

"Is there somet'ing?" he presently capitulated. With all his arrogance, he could not hold out against that determined, though quietly waiting, Mrs. Brooks.

"Mr. Weinstein, what's the chance of me getting a raise this week?"

Mr. L. Weinstein met his saleswoman's abrupt request with the stratagem reserved for such attacks.

"Abso-lutely not'ing doing, Mrs. Brooks."

The petitioner should have been annihilated, but she stood her ground.

L. Weinstein followed his rebuff with a congealing stare, while behind his stony front there kindled a special resentment. He was recalling their recent skirmish about the coats. Did this

young woman think she could get money out of S. Weinstein & Co. on that kind of a proposition? He would give her to understand— But, no!

The deep knowledge of human nature upon which Mr. L. Weinstein based his success in business checked an unstrategic outburst. With fine restraint and irony, he insinuated:

"I understand it you got another offer, Mrs. Brooks?"

"No, I ain't got an offer," denied Mrs. Brooks. "I got a raise in my rent."

Mr. Weinstein revised his blackmail theory, temporarily, at least. It was the same old story, to be met in the same old way.

"Any time we can make out of the business higher wages for our help, we pay it, Mrs. Brooks."

Mr. Weinstein coldly resumed his bill sifting. Still she did not go.

"I try to make good, Mr. Weinstein, and I don't ask any more than I feel I'm worth, the way prices are."

He glanced up and met in her direct blue eyes such a frank and disconcerting faith in her cause that he was constrained to advise:

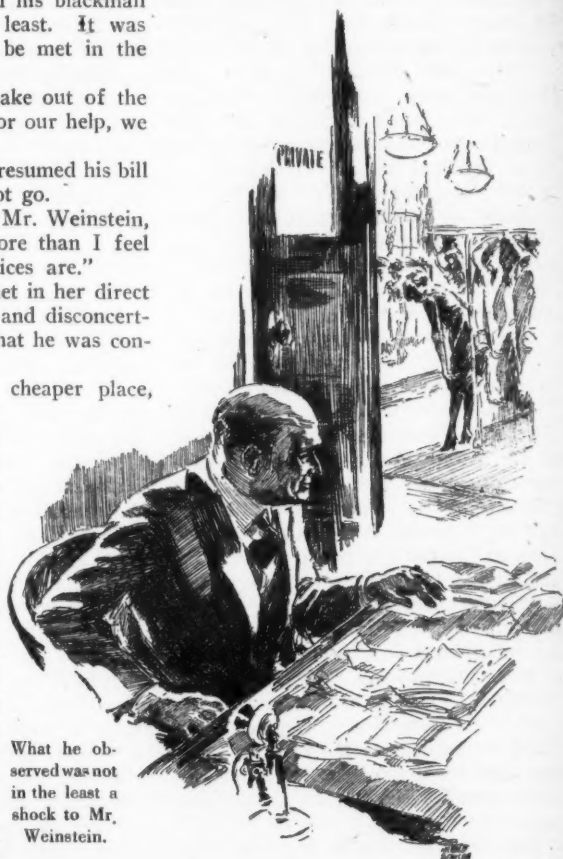
"You should rent a cheaper place, Mrs. Brooks."

The subject recalled quite soothingly to the manager that S. Weinstein's had not done so bad by the recent jump in apartment rentals. On the other hand, they might all be coming to him now with the plea of "a raise in rent." It was comical to think of S. Weinstein, Suits and Coats, paying higher wages to meet S. Weinstein and other apartment owners' raise in rents! It was a proposition which appealed

to the manager's limited sense of humor. He wanted to chuckle. Instead, he raised his padded palm and brought it down with a smack upon his crinkly pile of opened mail.

"Take it from me, Mrs. Brooks, there ain't a young woman in this store that ain't getting every cent she's wort' already to S. Weinstein, Suits and Coats!"

The manager's fierceness, having accomplished its purpose, quickly ebbed as he watched his retreating saleswoman. Was it possible to detect



What he observed was not in the least a shock to Mr. Weinstein.

something defiant in the tilt of her classic little head, or the least hitch of determination in her gliding walk?

Mr. L. Weinstein even moved from his chair to get a fresh angle when the young woman disappeared behind a reel of dangling merchandise. Having watched until he was satisfied that she had resumed the business of arranging her stock in her usual energetic and competent manner, he turned away with his slow, fat smile.

This second skirmish with Mrs. Brooks would have been more pleasant for Mr. Weinstein to dwell upon than the first had not more important conquests driven it from his mind.

The great January slaughter sale promised to be "a cleaning." S. Weinstein, Suits and Coats, had advertised with an eye to the "swellest" trade, and, in the exultant Mr. L. Weinstein's own words, "the ladies had fell for it."

Early in the afternoon, he expansively and odoriferously welcomed one of the most aristocratic "sheep"—judging from appearances—which had as yet been attracted to the "slaughter."

The lady was looking for "something in fur coats." He bowed her to the section presided over by Mrs. Brooks.

It was almost too much to believe that the sale had been made so quickly, when that smart young saleswoman came gliding toward the desk with one of the "\$439.50, marked down from \$485.00," fur coats draped luxuriously over her arm, and placed a sales slip and a thousand-dollar bill before the manager.

Mr. Weinstein stared at the money, his eyes popping. He tested it between fat thumb and forefinger as he would a piece of goods. "My God!" he breathed. Then he had an inspiration.

He had barely time to dispatch a reliable young man to the bank to have the note verified when the purchaser of the coat bore impatiently down upon him.

Her "get up" would have deceived

any one except the clever Mr. Weinstein. He told himself so as he looked her over. The conventional type, dark eyes, prematurely white hair beneath a drooping black velvet hat, pearl eardrops, cape and muff of mink, altogether "neat and elegant."

"Just be seated once, lady," invited Mr. Weinstein, with a judicious tinge of reserve in his ample courtesy.

The lady would not be seated. She paced about, pausing now and then to tap the floor with a foot which was incased in an exquisite satin pump.

Mr. Weinstein grew more and more suspicious of her behavior. But "no female crook could put somet'ing over on him, he didn't think."

With which self-congratulatory assurance, he again invited the lady to be seated.

The haughty customer again ignored the formality.

"Where is that saleswoman, the red-haired one?" she imperiously demanded. "What has she done with my parcel and my change?"

She was in far too great a rush for her parcel and her change, Mr. Weinstein was thinking, while he blandly assured her that the delay was probably due to their enormous volume of trade, and that no inattention on the part of their help would be tolerated by S. Weinstein, Suits and Coats.

Meantime he was fully aware that his red-haired saleswoman was ambushed near the rear entrance, ready to intercept the returning messenger. He had watched her disappear behind a protecting reel of merchandise. He had even seen her, in that supposed privacy, duck suddenly to adjust some part of her intimate apparel. She was losing a change purse out of her stocking, or "mebbe her garter, what?" reflected Mr. Weinstein complacently as Mrs. Brooks disappeared from his angle of vision. If he could have watched her intent, almost pantherlike attitude, where she

stood waiting near the door, could have been close enough to catch the quick throb of her breathing, he would have been more than ever convinced of his good judgment in the selection of saleswomen.

As it was, he had no fear of her failure in this emergency. With skillfully concealed surprise, he received her quick signal of affirmation as she started to the cashier's cage for her change.

The messenger had returned, the thousand-dollar bill was genuine, and everything going well, until the waiting customer interfered.

Could it be possible they had blundered? The lady must have caught some maneuver which betrayed to her the truth of the situation.

She was outraged, she refused her purchase. She demanded the return of her money.

Mr. Weinstein became outwardly abject, while within he underwent a mighty revulsion of opinion. The bill had proved genuine, and so had the lady's indignation. He had known it all the time that a lady got up so conservative couldn't be a female swindler. He told himself, in those very words, that he had known it all the time. He encompassed the lady about with apologies, but she was unappeasable.

"It is quite too late, after such an insult," she cuttingly responded, "to offer excuses to Mrs. J. J. Williams, whose husband is one of the highest-rated men in the city."

"Oh, sure, Mrs. Williams!" L. Weinstein threw out his fat hands. He deferentially wagged his head. "Sure—Mr. Williams—Mr. J. J. Williams—"

He rolled the name caressingly on his tongue to convince his offended customer, as well as himself, that he was on most intimate terms with that particular Mr. Williams. "If the young woman had of explained who it was— But accidents will happen, even by such a courteous and unsus-

picious house as S. Weinstein, Suits and Coats, you understand—"

"I gather you are not accustomed to receiving bills of a considerable denomination," cut in Mrs. Williams. "On the other hand, I am not in the habit of shopping at second-class establishments."

With this stinging retort, she held out her gloved hand for her money in a way which was not to be denied.

Mr. Weinstein, having temporarily run out of apologies, turned to the quaking Mrs. Brooks. And in that moment of great personal anguish he snatched at the straw of consolation, that if S. Weinstein, Suits and Cloaks, must lose the sale, the girl also lost her commission. Such a fat commission is worth hanging out for, when one's rent has just been raised. Mrs. Brooks had such a ghastly look when she finally relinquished the bill it seemed to him it was going to make her sick to lose it.

At the climax of the painful affair, Mr. Weinstein found himself wishing Mrs. Brooks' bonus on this particular sale had been doubled in order that she might stand a greater percentage of the loss. Then he suddenly retracted the wish.

The lady had relented. After turning her back upon them and walking nearly to the front of the store, she changed her mind. This was doubtless because Mrs. Brooks had followed her, in mute appeal, with the \$560.50 in change and the parcel containing the \$439.50 fur coat, marked down from \$485.00, which she finally accepted in exchange for her thousand-dollar bill.

With so great a crush of trade on the floor, Mr. Weinstein could not get away to deposit the deluge of cash which flooded his coffer. Just at bank-closing hour, he sent Mr. Lembewsky, his trusted assistant and bookkeeper.

Fifteen minutes later, Mr. Weinstein and his trusted assistant and bookkeeper



"Mrs. Brooks, you're fired!"
he hoarsely yelled.

stood facing each other in the private office. Mr. Lembewsky's thin, hawk face was rigid, ghastly with the shock of the calamity which had befallen.

Mr. Weinstein held in his shaking fat fingers a thousand-dollar bill, at which he stared abhorrently, while his big face fluctuated from white to purple, and through the other chromatic shades back to white.

"It—it ain't no good?" gurgled Mr. Weinstein as soon as he was able to make a sound. "They said it—it's phony?"

"Phony!" echoed Mr. Lembewsky hollowly.

"But—but how should that be? The bank O. K.'d it this afternoon already."

Mr. Lembewsky weakly shook his head in hopeless denial of any possible explanation.

"Phony!" panted Mr. Weinstein. "Lembewsky, go quick and bring Jacobs here."

Jacobs, the messenger who had been sent to the bank with the suspected currency, threw no light on the mystery. He persisted in declaring that the bill had been passed by the head cashier. While the scared, though stubborn, young man was giving his testimony Mr. Weinstein had an inspiration.

He ordered his frozen assistant to "get a move on" and call police headquarters. Then he sent for Mrs. Brooks.

The saleswoman's marblelike composure as she entered the office and closed the door baited his frenzy.

"Phony! This money is no good—phony!" he burst out, brandishing the bill accusingly in her face.

"What—what money you talking about?" groped the saleswoman.

"That—that—look at it! That bill you turned in this afternoon already! How many thousand-dollar bills should you think we handle in one day?"

"O-o-oh, that! I thought"—with a break of unsteadiness in her voice—"I thought the cashier at the bank passed on it. Did he make a mistake then?"

"The cashier made no mistake." Mr. Weinstein dropped heavily into his chair, which gave him a creaking reception. He brought his great wad of a fist down on the desk with a muffled thud. "The cashier made no mistake. That money we sent by the bank this afternoon was good. This—this is bad, counterfeited—phony! S. Weinstein, Suits and Coats, is robbed by a female crook!"

The young woman gripped the desk, and the blood went from her face, leaving it deadly white except for the trace of rouge which the day's strenuous drive still left intact.

In spite of his grief and anger, Mr. Weinstein could not help gloating over this evidence that at last he had penetrated her stolidity. Here was one victim for his vengeance. He would take what reprisal he could.

"We deduct all the commissions on your to-day's sales, Mrs. Brooks. You let that female crook change those bills on you!"

"Oh!" uttered Mrs. Brooks, a little, gasping oh! Her grip of the desk relaxed. "She—changed them? She—Mrs. Williams—a crook?"

"Sure, she was a crook. She ain't no Mrs. Williams. You should know she was a crook. You should never of let her got that money away from you again. You should always hold onto the money!"

"Oh, I should—always—hold onto—the money," the girl articulated, with a queer little contortion of her mouth which the bruised Mr. Weinstein could almost interpret as a smile of derision.

"We deduct your commissions on all your this week's sales, Mrs. Brooks!" he shouted for good measure.

Still the semblance of a smile persisted.

"I should always—always hold—onto—the money!" repeated Mrs. Brooks in a small, strange voice.

Mr. Weinstein could have no doubt that she was making fun of him. He almost choked with complications of wrath and resentment. He brought his desk another padded blow.

"Mrs. Brooks, you're fired!" he hoarsely yelled.

The next instant he sat blinking at the door, which had been swiftly but noiselessly closed behind his departing saleswoman.

That inscrutable Mrs. Brooks had unexpectedly taken him at his word.

Late that night, in a fifth-story hotel room of an adjacent town, "Mrs. J. J. Williams" lay half disrobed and half asleep upon the bed.

She was roused by a muffled signal at her door, two quick raps, and then three.

She started up, finding her way by the reflected light from a dazzling movie-theater front across the street. After challenging her caller in a low voice, she drew the bolt.

The man she admitted dropped his empty suit case on a chair, crossed the room, and carefully drew the shade at the window. Then he clicked on the light and took off his auto coat and goggles.

The woman sat on the edge of the bed, blinking at the sudden glare. She was youngish, with dark eyes and dark hair which straggled loosely over her bare shoulders. A wavy white wig and a big black velvet hat lay on the stand.

"You got rid of the coat?" she asked, fumbling to remove the pearl eardrops from her ears.

He was cramming the hat, the wig, and the rest of her discarded costume into the suit case.

"The coat? Oh, yes. Goldberg says it's only worth \$125.00. What was it you paid?"

"Paid?" She yawned wearily. "It was marked \$439.50. But what of that? It didn't cost me anything."

He finished his precipitous packing, locked the suit case, and stood reaching out his hand with a gesture she understood.

From her lingerie she extracted a purse, which she handed to him.

He turned to the stand and began counting out bank notes, pulling them crisply between thumb and forefinger, one, two, three, four, five one-hundred-dollar bills, and then—a startled oath.

As he turned upon her with a thousand-dollar bill gripped in his whitening fingers, she sat up quickly.

"You—you got cold feet?" he hoarsely demanded.

"Cold feet!" she scorned. "Quit your crabbing about that coat, Jim Keller. It didn't cost you——"

"Cost!" he gritted. "Cost! Hell! You've thrown away a thousand dollars and expenses! D'ye think I ain't on? Didn't I make this myself?" He thrust the crisp, new paper before her sleepily staring eyes. "Don't you know you've brought back the green goods?"

A few months after Mr. L. Weinstein had discharged his most competent saleswoman a dirty little girl was playing in the unsodded yard of a squat new bungalow at the city's outskirts. Other dirty little children played in front yards of similar bungalows, along the newly opened street. But this little girl was distinguished by the soft fairness of her tiny face and the golden redness of her fluffy curls. She was pushing a dilapidated little cab to give a likewise dilapidated doll a Sunday outing in the glorious sunshine.

A man appeared in the open door of the bungalow. He was a youthful-looking man, coatless, with the stains of toil upon his hands and clothing. His gray eyes lighted fondly at sight of the little girl.

"Dorothy mustn't go out of the yard," he cautioned.

"Daddy—daddy!" sang the baby girl. Deserting her doll cab at the very edge of the embankment, she toddled across the hummocky yard.

The man caught her up and carried her into the tiny front room, where a woman was sweeping.

The young woman in percale was as chic as a figure from the house-frocks page of a fashion journal. Her skin was pale, and the cap did not conceal the thick waves of auburn hair which brushed her forehead.

She smiled at the two as the young man gayly carried the little girl into the bedroom, where he had been engrossed in the Sunday-morning job of "ridding up" his drawer in the chiffonier.

Presently the little girl came toddling out, clutching in her grimy, gleeful small fingers a scrap of green paper which rattled divertingly.

The woman paused abruptly and stared at the baby's plaything.

"Ray—Ray Brooks!" she panted in a voice of alarm, and the handle of her dust mop fell with a sharp thwack to the floor. "What's this Dorothy's found?"

The man came plunging out of the bedroom and dropped on his knees to coax the newly acquired "pretty" away from the little girl.

"It's the other one of them thousand-dollar bills," he explained sheepishly to his wife, who stood, dumbly staring, as if petrified by some approaching terror. "It must have slipped out of the envelope and got lost in the drawer some way. I always thought you had it along with that one you—got rid of at Wein——"

Suddenly galvanized into motion, she pressed a hand over his lips, with an uttered protest which was like a moan.

"Don't!" she shuddered. "Take it away, quick! Burn it!"

The Lamp of Destiny

By Margaret Pedler

Author of "The Hermit of Far End," "The House of Dreams-Come-True," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY R. VAN BUREN

The romance in the life of Magda Vallincourt draws to a close

CHAPTER XXX.

THE curtains swung together for the last time, the orchestra struck up the national anthem, and the great audience which had come from all parts to witness the Wielitzska's farewell performance began to disperse.

A curious quietness attended its departure. It was as if a pall of gravity hung over the big assemblage. Public announcements of the performance had explained that the famous dancer proposed taking a long rest for reasons of health. "But," as every one declared, "you know what that means! She's probably broken down—heart or something. We shall never see her dance again!" And so, beneath the tremendous reception which they gave her, there throbbed an element of sadness, behind all the cheers and the clapping an insistent minor note which carried across the footlights to where Magda stood bowing her thanks and smiling through the mist of tears which filled her eyes.

The dance which she had chosen for her last appearance was "The Swan Maiden." There had seemed a strange applicability in the choice, and to those who had eyes to see there was a new quality in the Wielitzska's dancing, a depth of significance and a spirituality of interpretation which was commented upon in the press the next day.

It had been quite unmistakable. She had gripped her audience so that

throughout the final scene of the ballet no word was spoken. The big crowd, drawn from all classes, sat tense and silent, sensitive to every movement, every exquisite, appealing gesture of the Swan Maiden. And when at last she had lain, limp in death, in her lover's embrace, and the music had quivered into silence, there followed a vibrant pause; almost it seemed as if a sigh of mingled ecstasy and regret went up before the thunderous applause roared through the auditorium.

The insatiable few were still clapping and stamping assiduously when Magda, after taking innumerable calls, at last came off the stage. It had been a wonderful night of triumph, and as she made her way toward her dressing room she was conscious of a sudden breathless realization of all that she was sacrificing. For a moment she felt as if she must rush back on to the stage and tell everybody that she couldn't do it, that it was all a mistake—this was not a farewell! But she set her teeth and moved resolutely toward her dressing room.

As her fingers closed round the handle of the door, some one stepped out from the shadows of the passage and spoke.

"Magda!"

The voice, wrung and urgent, was Antoine Davilof's.

Her first impulse was to hurry forward and put the dressing-room door betwixt herself and him. She had not

The story began in the December number.

seen him since that night when he had come down to the theater and implored her to be his wife, warning her that he would prevent her marriage with Michael. He had carried out his threat with a completeness which had wrecked her life, and although, since the breaking off of her engagement, he had both written and telephoned, begging her to see him, she had steadfastly refused. Once he had come to Friars' Holm, but had been met with an inexorable "Not at home," from Melrose.

"Magda! For God's sake, give me a moment!"

Something in the strained tones moved her to an unexpected feeling of compassion. It was the voice of a man in the extremity of mental anguish.

Silently she opened the door of the dressing room and signed to him to follow her.

"Well," she said, facing him, "what is it? Why have you come?"

The impulse of compassion died out suddenly. His was the hand that had destroyed her happiness. The sight of him roused her to a fierce anger and resentment.

"Well?" she repeated. "What do you want? To know the result of your handiwork?" she added bitterly. "You've been quite as successful as even you could have wished."

"Don't!" he said unevenly. "Magda, I can't bear it. You can't give up—all this! Your dancing—it's your life! I shall never forgive myself. I'll see Quarrington and tell him——"

"You can't see him. He's gone away."

"Then I'll find him."

"If you found him, nothing you could say would make any difference," she answered unemotionally. "It's the facts that matter. You can't alter facts."

Davilof made a gesture of despair.

"Is it true you're going into some sisterhood?" he asked hoarsely.

"Yes."

"And it is I—I who have driven you to this! *Dieu!* I've been mad—mad!"

His hands were clenched, his face working painfully. The hazel eyes—those poet's eyes of his, which she had seen sometimes soft with dreams and sometimes blazing with love's fire—were blurred by misery. They reminded her of the contrite, tortured eyes of a dog which, maddened by pain, has bitten the hand of a beloved master. Her anger died away in the face of that overwhelming remorse. She herself had learned to know the illimitable bitterness of self-reproach.

"Antoine." Her voice had grown very gentle.

He swung round on her.

"And I can't undo it!" he exclaimed desperately. "I can't undo it! Magda, will you believe me—will you *try* to believe that, if my life could undo the harm I've done, I'd give it gladly?"

"I believe you would, Antoine," she replied simply.

With a stifled exclamation he turned away and, dropping into a chair, leaned his arms on the table and hid his face. Once, twice she heard the sound of a man's hard-drawn sob, and the dry agony of it wrung her heart. All that was sweet and compassionate in her, the potential mother that lies in every woman, responded to his need. She ran to him and, kneeling at his side, laid a kind little hand on his shoulder.

"Don't, Antoine!" she said pitifully. "Ah, don't, my dear!"

He caught the hand and held it against his cheek.

"It's unforgivable!" he muttered.

"No, no. I do forgive you."

"You can't forgive! Impossible!"

"I think I can, Antoine," Magda said slowly. "You see, I need forgiveness so badly myself. I wouldn't want to keep any one else without it. Besides," she went on sorrowfully, "Michael would have been bound to learn—what you told him—sooner or later." She

rose to her feet, pushing back the hair from her forehead rather wearily. "It's better as it is—that he should know now. It—it would have been unbearable if it had come later, when I was his wife."

Antoine stumbled to his feet. His beautiful face was marred with grief.

"I wish I were dead!"

The words broke from him like an exceeding bitter cry. To Magda they seemed to hold some terrible import.

"Not that, Antoine!" she answered in a frightened voice. "You're not thinking—you're not meaning——"

He shook his head, smiling faintly.

"No," he said quietly. "The Davilofs have never been cowards. I shan't take that way out. You need have no fears, Magda." The sudden tension in her face relaxed. "But I shall not stay in England. England—without you—would be hell! A hell of memories!"

"What shall you do, then, Antoine? You won't give up playing?"

He made a fierce gesture of distaste.

"I couldn't play in public! Not now. Not for a time. I think," he went on simply, "I shall go to my mother. She always wants me, and she sees me very little."

Magda nodded. Her eyes were wistful.

"Yes, go to her. I think mothers must understand as other people can't ever understand. She will be glad to have you with her, Antoine."

He was silent for a moment, his eyes dwelling on her face as if he sought to learn each line of it, so that when she would be no more beside him he might carry the memory of it in his heart forever.

"Then it is good-by," he said at last.

Magda held out her hands and, taking them in his, he drew her close to him.

"I love you," he said. "And I have brought you only pain." There was a tragic simplicity in the statement.

"No," she answered steadily. "Never

think that. I spoiled my own life. And—love is a big gift, Antoine."

She lifted her face to his and very tenderly, almost reverently, he kissed her. She knew that in that last kiss there was no disloyalty to Michael. It held renunciation. It accepted forgiveness.

"Did you know that Dan Storrان was in front to-night?" asked Gillian, as, half an hour later, she and Magda were driving back to Hampstead together. She had already confided the fact of her former meeting with him in the tea shop.

Magda's eyes widened a little.

"No," she said quietly. "I think I'm glad I didn't know."

She was very silent throughout the remainder of the drive home, and Gillian made no effort to distract her. She herself felt disinclined to talk. She was oppressed by the knowledge that this was the last night she and Magda would have with each other. To-morrow Magda would be gone and one chapter of their lives together ended. The gates of the Sisters of Penitence would close upon her, and Friars' Holm would be empty of her presence.

Everything had been said that could be said, every persuasion used. But to each and all Magda had only answered: "I know it's the only thing for me to do. It probably wouldn't be for you, or for any one else. But it is for me. So you must let me go, Gillyflower."

Gillian dreaded the morrow with its inevitable moment of farewell. As for Virginie, she had done little else but weep for the last three days, and, although Lady Arabella had said very little, she had kissed her goddaughter good-by with a brusqueness which veiled an inexpressible grief and tenderness. Gillian foresaw that betwixt administering comfort to Lady Arabella and Virginie, and setting Magda's personal affairs in order after her departure, she would have little time for the indul-



Davilof made a gesture of despair. "And it is I—I who have driven you to this! *Dieu!* I've been mad—mad!"

gence of her own individual sorrow. Perhaps it was just as well that these tasks should devolve on her. They would serve to occupy her thoughts.

The morning sunlight, goldenly gay, was streaming in through the windows as Magda, wrapped in a soft silken peignoir, made her way into the bathroom. Virginie, her eyes reddened from a night's weeping, was kneeling beside the sunk bath of green-veined marble, stirring sweet-smelling salts into the steaming water. Their fragrance permeated the atmosphere like incense.

"My tub ready, Virginie?" asked Magda cheerfully.

Virginie scrambled to her feet.

"*Mais oui, ma'moiselle.* The bath is ready."

Then, her face puckering up suddenly, she burst into tears and ran out of the room. Magda smiled and sighed, then busied herself with her morning ablutions, prolonging them a little as she realized that this was the last occasion for a whole year when she would step down into a bath prepared and perfumed for her in readiness by her maid.

A year! It was a long time to look forward to. So much can happen in a year. And no one can foresee what the end may bring.

Presently she emerged from her bath,

her skin gleaming like wet ivory, her dark hair sparkling with the drops of water which had splashed on to it. As she stepped up from its green-veined depths, she caught a glimpse of herself in a panel mirror hung against the wall, and for a moment she was aware of the familiar thrill of delight in her own beauty—in the gleaming, glowing radiance of perfectly formed, perfectly groomed flesh and blood.

Then, with a revulsion of feeling, came the sudden realization that it was this very perfection of body which had been her undoing, like a bitter blight, leaving in its wake a trail of havoc and desolation. She was even conscious of a fierce eagerness for the period of penance to begin. Almost ecstatically she contemplated the giving of her body to whatever discipline might be appointed.

To any one hitherto as spoiled and imperious as Magda, whose body had been the actual temple of her art, and so, almost inevitably, of her worship, this utter renouncing of physical self-government was the supremest expiation she could make. As with Hugh Vallincourt, whose blood ran in her veins, the idea of personal renunciation made a curious appeal to her emotional temperament, and she was momentarily filled with something of the martyr's ecstasy.

Gillian's arms clung round Magda's neck convulsively as she kissed her at the great gates of Friars' Holm a few hours later.

"Good-by! Ah, Magda! Come back to me!"

"I shall come back," said Magda reassuringly.

One more lingering kiss, and then Magda stepped into the open car. Virginie made a rush forward before the door closed, and, dropping on to her knees on the footboard, convulsively snatched her adored young mistress' hand between her two old worn ones and covered it with kisses.

"Oh, *ma'moiselle mignonne*, thy old Virginie will die without thee!" she sobbed brokenly.

And then the car slid away and Magda's last glimpse was of the open gates of Friars' Holm, with its Old World garden, stately and formal, in the background, and of Virginie weeping unrestrainedly, her snowy apron flung up over her head, and of Gillian standing erect, her brown eyes very wide and winking away the tears which welled up despite herself, and her hand on Coppertop's small manful shoulder, gripping it hard.

As the car passed through the streets many people, recognizing its occupant, stopped and turned to follow it with their eyes. One or two women waved their hands, and a small errand boy, who had saved up his pennies and squeezed into the gallery of the Imperial Theater the previous evening, threw up his hat and shouted, "Hooray!"

Once, at a crossing, the chauffeur was compelled to pull up to allow the traffic to pass, and a flower girl with a big basket of early violets on her arm, recognizing the famous dancer, tossed a bunch lightly into the car. They fell on Magda's lap. She picked them up and, brushing them with her lips, smiled at the girl and fastened the violets against the furs at her breast. The flower girl treasured the smile of the great Wielitzska in her memory for many a long day, while in the arid months which were to follow Magda treasured the sweet fragrance of that spontaneous gift.

Half an hour later the doors of the gray house where the Sisters of Penitence dwelt apart from the world opened to receive Magda Vallincourt and closed again behind her.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Magda felt a sudden stab of fear. The sound of the latch clicking into its place brought home to her the irrevocability of the step she had taken. That

tall, self-locking door stood henceforth between her and the dear familiar world she had known—the world of laughter and luxury and success. But beyond, on the far horizon, there was Michael—her “Saint Michael.” If these months of discipline brought her nearer him, then she would never grudge them.

The serene eyes of the sister who received her, Sister Bernardine, helped to steady her quivering pulses.

There was something in Sister Bernardine which was altogether lacking in Catherine Vallincourt—a delightfully human understanding and charity for all human weakness, whether of the soul or body.

It was she who reassured Magda when a sudden appalling and unforeseen idea presented itself to her.

“My hair!” she exclaimed breathlessly, her hand going swiftly to the heavy, smoke-black tresses. “Will they cut off my hair?”

As Sister Bernardine comfortingly explained that only those who joined the community as sisters had their heads shaven, a strange expression flickered for an instant in her eyes, a fleeting reminiscence of that day, five-and-twenty years ago, when the shears had cropped their ruthless way through the glory of hair which had once been hers.

And afterward, as time went on and Magda, wearing the gray veil and gray serge dress of a voluntary penitent, found herself absorbed into the daily life of the community, it was often only the recollection of Sister Bernardine's serene, kind eyes which helped her to hold out. Somehow, somewhere out of this drastic, self-denying life Sister Bernardine had drawn peace and tranquillity of soul, and Magda clung to this thought when the hard rules of the sisterhood, the distastefulness of the tasks appointed her, and the frequent fasts ordained, chafed and fretted her until sometimes her whole soul seemed

to rise up in rebellion against the very discipline she had craved.

Most of her tasks were performed under the lynx eyes of Sister Agnetia, an elderly and sour-visaged sister, to whom Magda had taken an instinctive dislike from the outset. The mother superior she could tolerate. She was severe and compromising. But she was at least honest. There was no doubting the bedrock genuineness of her disciplinary ardor, harsh and merciless though it might appear. But with Sister Agnetia, Magda was always sensible of the personal venom of a little mind, vested with authority beyond its deserts, and she resented her dictation accordingly. And, equally accordingly, it seemed to fall always to her lot to work under Sister Agnetia's supervision.

Catherine had been quick enough to detect Magda's detestation of this particular sister and to use it as a further means of discipline. It was necessary that Magda's pride and vanity should be humbled, and Catherine saw to it that they were. It was assuredly by the will of Heaven that the child of Diane Wielitzka had been led to her very doors, and to the subject of her chastening Catherine brought much thought and discrimination.

“If you hurt people enough you can make them good.”

It had been her brother's bitter creed and it was hers. Pain, in Catherine's idea, was the surest means of chastening, and Magda was to remember her year at the sisterhood by two things—by the deadly, unbearable monotony of its daily routine and by her first acquaintance with actual bodily pain.

Her health had always been magnificent, and, with the exception of the trivial punishments of childhood and those few moments when she was sitting for the picture of Circe, physical suffering was unknown to her. The penances, therefore, which Catherine appointed her—to kneel for a stated

length of time until it seemed as if every muscle she possessed were stretched to breaking point, to fast when her whole healthy young body craved for food, to be chastised with the flagellum, a scourge of knotted cords—all these grew to be a torment almost beyond endurance.

Almost! Yet in the beginning the thought of Michael sustained her triumphantly.

CHAPTER XXXII.

For the first month or two after Magda's departure Gillian found that she had her hands full in settling up various business and personal matters which had been left with loose ends. She was frankly thankful to discover that there were so many matters requiring her attention; otherwise the blank occasioned in her life by Magda's absence would have been almost unendurable.

The two girls had grown very much into each other's hearts during the years they had shared together, and when friends part, no matter how big a wrench the separation may mean to the one who goes, there is a special kind of sadness reserved for the one who is left behind. For the one who sets out there are fresh faces, new activities in store. Even through the new life adventured upon may not prove to be precisely a bed of thornless roses, the pricking of the thorns provides distraction to the mind from the sheer, undiluted pain of separation.

But for Gillian, left behind at Friars' Holm, there remained nothing but an hourly sense of loss added to that crushing, inevitable flatness which succeeds a crisis of any kind.

Nor did a forlorn Coppertop's reiterated inquiries as to how soon the Fairy Lady might be expected back again help to mend matters. "'Cos, you see," he would explain wistfully, "I'll be gettin'

grown up, and she mighn't retonise me if she stays too long."

Lady Arabella's grief was expressed in a characteristically prickly fashion.

"Young people don't seem to know the first thing about love nowadays," she observed, with the customary scathing contempt of one age for another.

In my young days! Ah! There will never be times like those again! We are all quite sure of it as our young days recede into the misty past.

"If you loved, you loved," pursued Lady Arabella crisply. "And the death of half a dozen sisters wouldn't have been allowed to interfere with the proceedings."

Gillian smiled a little.

"It wasn't only that. It was Michael's bitter disappointment in Magda, I think, quite as much as the fact that, indirectly, he held her responsible for June's death."

"It's ridiculous to try and foist Mrs. Storran's death on to Magda," fumed Lady Arabella restively. "If she hadn't the physical health to have a good, hearty baby successfully, she shouldn't have attempted it. That's all! . . . And then those two idiots—Magda and Michael! Of course he must needs shoot off abroad, and equally of course she must be out of the way in a sisterhood when he comes rushing back—as he will do!" she ended with a grim smile.

"He hasn't done yet," Gillian pointed out.

"I give him precisely six months, my dear, before he finds out that, sister or no sister, he can't live without Magda. Michael Quarrington's got too much good red blood in his veins to live the life of a hermit. He's a man, thank goodness, not a mystical dreamer like Hugh Vallincourt! And he'll come back to his mate as surely as the sun will rise to-morrow."

"I wish I felt as confident as you do."

"I wish I could make sure of putting

my hand on Magda when he comes," grumbled Lady Arabella. "That's the hitch I'm afraid of! If only she hadn't been so precipitate—only waited a bit for him to come back to her."

"I don't agree with you," rapped out Gillian smartly. "Women are much too ready to do the patient Griselda stunt. I think," she went on, with a vicious little nod of her brown head, "it would do Michael all the good in the world to come back and want Magda—want her badly! And find he couldn't get her! So there!"

Lady Arabella regarded her with astonishment, then broke into a delighted chuckle.

"'Pon my word! If a tame dove had suddenly turned round and pecked at me, I couldn't have been more surprised! I didn't know you had so much of the leaven of malice and wickedness in you, Gillian!"

Gillian, a little flushed and feeling, in truth, rather surprised at herself for her sudden heat, smiled back at her.

"But I should have thought your opinion would have been very much the same as mine. I never expected you'd want Magda to sit down and twiddle her thumbs till"—explosively again—"till Michael chose to come back to her."

Lady Arabella sighed.

"I don't. Not really. Only I want them to be happy," she said a little sadly. "Love is such a rare thing—love like theirs. And it's hard that Magda should lose the beauty and happiness of it all because of mistakes she made before she found herself, so to speak."

Gillian nodded soberly. Lady Arabella had voiced precisely her own feeling in the matter. It *was* hard! And yet it was only the fulfillment of the immutable law: Who breaks, pays.

Gillian's thoughts tried to pierce the dim horizon. Perhaps all the pain and mistakes and misunderstandings of which this workaday world is so full are, after all, only a part of the beautiful

tapestry which the patient fingers of God are weaving—a dark and somber warp, giving value to the gold and silver and jeweled threads of the weft which shall cross it. When the ultimate fabric is woven, and the tissue released from the loom, there will surely be no meaningless thread, sable, or silver, in the consummated pattern.

A few weeks after Magda's departure Gillian received a letter from Dan Storrán, reminding her of her promise to let him see her and asking if she would lunch with him somewhere in town.

It was with somewhat mixed feelings that she met him again. He was so much altered, so changed from the hot-headed, primitive countryman she had first known. Some chance remark of hers enlightened him as to her confused sense of the difference in him and he smiled across at her.

"I've been through the mill, you see," he explained quietly, "since the Stockleigh days."

The words seemed almost like a key unlocking the door which stands fast shut between one soul and another. He talked to her quite simply and frankly after that, telling her how, after he had left England, the madness in his blood had driven him whither it listed. There had been no depths to which he had not sunk, no wild living from which he had recoiled.

And then had come the news of June's death—not tenderly conveyed, but charged to his account by her sister with a fierce bitterness that had suddenly torn the veil from his eyes. Followed days and nights of agonized remorse, and after that the slow, steady, infinitely difficult climb back from the depths into which he had allowed himself to sink to a plane of life where, had June still lived, he would not have been ashamed to meet her eyes nor utterly unworthy to take her hand.

"It was the hardest thing I've ever



The penances which Catherine appointed her grew to be a torment almost beyond endurance.

had to do," he ended. "But she would have wished it. I can never tell her now how I—regret, never ask her forgiveness. And this was the only thing I could do to atone."

Gillian's eyes were very soft as she answered:

"I expect she knows, Dan, and is glad."

After a moment she went on thoughtfully:

"It's rather the same kind of feeling that has driven Magda into a sisterhood, I think—the desire to do something definite, something tangible, as a sort of reparation. And a woman is much more limited that way than a man."

Storran's mouth hardened. Any mention of Magda would bring that look of concentrated hardness into his face, and as the months went on, giving Gillian a closer insight into the man, she began to realize that he had never forgiven Magda for her share in the ruin of his life. On this one point he was as hard as nether millstone. He even seemed to derive a certain satisfaction from the knowledge that she was paying, and paying heavily, for all the harm she had wrought.

It troubled Gillian, this incalculable hardness in Dan's nature toward one woman. She herself found him kindly and tolerant in his outlook on life, with the understanding tolerance of the man who has dragged himself out of the pit by his own sheer force of will, and who, knowing the power of temptation, is ready to give a helping hand to others who may have fallen by the way. So that his relentlessness toward Magda was the more inexplicable.

More than once she tried to soften his attitude, tried to make him realize something of the conflicting influences both of temperament and environment which had helped to make Magda what she was. But he remained stubbornly unmoved.

- "No punishment is too severe for a

woman who has done what Magda Valincourt has done. She has wrecked lives simply in order to gratify her vanity and insensate instinct for conquest."

Gillian shook her head.

"No, you're wrong. You *won't* understand! It's all that went before—her parents' mistakes—that should be blamed for half she's done. I think you're very merciless, Dan."

"Perhaps I am—in this case. Frankly, if I could lessen her punishment by lifting my little finger—I wouldn't do it."

Yet this same man, when, as often happened, he took Gillian and Copper-top for a run into the country in his car, was as simple and considerate and kindly as a man could be. Copper-top adored him, and as Gillian reflected, the love of children is rarely misplaced. Some instinct leads them to divine unfailingly which is gold and which dross.

The car was a recent acquisition. As Storran himself expressed it rather bitterly: "Now that I can't buy a ha'p'orth of happiness with the money, my luck has turned." He explained to Gillian that after he had left England, he had sold his farm in Devonshire and that a lucky investment of the capital thus realized had turned him into a comparatively rich man.

"Even when I was making ducks and drakes of my life generally, I didn't seem able to make a mistake over money matters. If I played cards, I won; if I backed a horse, he romped in first; if I bought shares, they jumped up immediately."

"What a pity!" replied Gillian ingenuously. "If only your financial affairs hadn't prospered, you'd have had to settle down and work—instead of—of—"

"Playing the fool," he supplemented. "No, I don't suppose I should. I hadn't learned—then—that work is the only panacea, the one big remedy."

"And now?"

"I've learned a lot of things in the

last two years," quietly. "And I'm still learning."

As the months went on, Dan's friendship began to mean a good deal to Gillian. It had come into her life just at a time when she was intolerably lonely, and quite unconsciously she was learning to turn to him for advice on all the large and small affairs of daily life as they came cropping up.

She was infinitely glad of his counsel with regard to Coppertop, who was growing to the age when the want of a father, of a man's broad outlook and a man's restraining hand, becomes an acute lack in a boy's life. And to Gillian, who had gallantly faced the world alone since the day when death had abruptly ended her "year of utter happiness," it was inexpressibly sweet to be once more shielded and helped in all the big and little ways in which a man, even if he be only a stanch man friend, can shield and help a woman.

It seemed as if Dan Storrان always contrived to interpose his big person between her and the sharp corners of life, and she began to wonder, with a faint, indefinable dread, what must become of their friendship when Magda returned to Friars' Holm. Feeling as he did toward the dancer, it would be impossible for him to come there any more, and somehow a snatched hour here and there—a lunch together, or a motor spin into the country—would be a very poor substitute for his almost daily visits to the old Queen Anne house tucked away behind its high walls at Hampstead.

Once she broached the subject to him rather diffidently.

"My dear"—he had somehow dropped into the use of the little term of endearment and Gillian found that she liked it and knew that she would miss it if it were suddenly erased from his speech—"my dear, why cross bridges till we come to them? Perhaps, when the time comes, there'll be no bridges to cross."

Gillian glanced at him swiftly.

"Do you mean that she—that you're feeling less bitter toward her, Dan?" she asked eagerly.

He smiled down at her whimsically.

"I don't quite know. But I know one thing—it's very difficult to be a lot with you and keep one's anger strictly up to concert pitch."

Gillian made no answer. She was too wise, with that intuitive wisdom of woman, to force the pace. If Dan were beginning to relent ever so little toward Magda—why, then, her two best friends might yet come together in comradeship and learn to forget the bitter past. The gentle hand of Time would be laid on old wounds, and its touch would surely bring healing. But Gillian would no more have thought of trying to hasten matters than she would have tried to force open the close-curved petals of a flower in bud.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Magda slipped through the tall doorway in the wall which marked the abode of the Sisters of Penitence and stood once more on the pavement of the busy street. The year was over, and just as once before the clicking of the latch had seemed to signify the end of everything, so now it sounded a quite different note—of new beginnings, of release—freedom!

Three months prior to the completion of her allotted span at the sisterhood, Magda had had a serious attack of illness. The hard and rigorous life had told upon her physically, while the unaccustomed restrictions, the constant obedience exacted, had gone far toward assisting in the utter collapse of nerves already frayed by the strain of previous happenings.

Probably her fierce determination to go through with her self-elected expiation, no matter what the cost, had a good deal to do with her ultimate breakdown. With unswerving resolution she had

forced herself to obedience, to the performance of her appointed tasks in spite of their distastefulness, and behind the daily work and discipline there had been all the time the ceaseless, aching longing for the man who had loved her and who had gone away.

It was not surprising, therefore, that the tired body and nerves at last gave way, and in the delirium of brain fever Magda revealed the whole pitiful story of the mistakes and misunderstandings which had brought her in desperation to the Sisters of Penitence.

Fortunately it was upon Sister Bernardine that the major part of the nursing devolved, and it was into her gentle ears that Magda unwittingly poured out the history of the past. Bit by bit, from the ramblings of delirium, Sister Bernardine pieced together the story, and her shy, virginial heart found itself throbbing in overflowing sympathy—a sympathy which sought expression in the tender care she gave her patient.

During the long, slow days of convalescence Magda, very helpless and dependent, had gradually learned to love the soft-footed little sister who came and went throughout her illness, to love her as she would not, at one time, have believed it possible she could grow to love any one behind the high gray walls which encircled the sisterhood.

If the past year had taught her nothing else, it had at least taught her that goodness and badness are very evenly distributed. She had found both good and bad behind those tall gray walls, just as she had found them in the great free world outside.

Her last memory, as her first, was of Sister Bernardine's kind eyes.

"Some of us find happiness in the world," the little sister had said at parting, "and some of us out of it. I think you were meant to find yours in the world."

It was Magda's own choice to leave the sisterhood on foot. She had noth-

ing to take with her in the way of luggage, and she smiled a little as she realized that, for the moment, she possessed actually nothing but the clothes she stood up in, the same in which she had quit Friars' Holm a year ago and which, on departure, she had substituted for the gray veil and habit she was discarding.

At first, as she made her way along the street, she found the continuous ebb and flow of the crowded thoroughfare somewhat confusing after the absolute calm and quiet of the preceding months, but very soon the Londoner's familiar love of London and of its ceaseless, kaleidoscopic movement returned to her, and with it the requisite poise to thread her way through the throngs which trod the pavements.

Then her eyes turned to the shop windows—Catherine's stern discipline had completely failed to stamp out the eternal feminine in her niece—and as they absorbed the silken stuffs and rainbow colors which gleamed and glowed behind the thick plate glass, she became suddenly conscious of her own attire, of its cut and style. When last she had worn it, it had been the final word in fashionable raiment. Now it was out of date, *démodé*! The Wielitzska, whose clothes the newspapers had loved to chronicle, in a frock in which any one of the "young ladies" behind the counters of those self-same shops into which she was gazing, would have declined to appear!

She almost laughed out loud.

And then, quick on the heels of her desire to laugh, came a revulsion of feeling. This little incident, just the disparity between the fashion of her own clothes and the fashion prevailing at the moment, served to make her realize, with a curious clarity of vision, the irrevocable passage of time. A year—a slice out of her life! What other differences would it ultimately show?

Something else was already making itself apparent—the fact that none of the

passers-by seemed to recognize her. In the old days, when she had been dancing constantly at the Imperial Theater, she had grown so used to seeing the sudden look of interest and recognition spring into the eyes of one or another, to the little eager gesture which nudged a companion, pointing out the famous dancer as she passed along the street, that she had thought nothing of it, had hardly consciously noticed it. Now she missed it, missed it extraordinarily.

A sudden sense of intense loneliness swept over her—the loneliness of the man who has been cast away on a desert island, only returning to his fellows after many weary months of absence. She felt she could not endure to waste another moment before she saw again the beloved faces of Gillian and Virginie and felt once more the threads of the old familiar life quiver and vibrate between her fingers.

With a quick, imperative gesture she hailed a taxi and was whirled away toward Hampstead.

The first excited greetings and embraces were over. The flurry of broken, scattered phrases, half tearfully, half smilingly welcoming her back, had spent themselves, and now old Virginie, drawing away, regarded her with bewildered, almost frightened eyes.

"*Mais, mon Dieu!*" she muttered. "*Mon Dieu!*" Then with a sudden cry: "*Chérie! Chérie!* What have they done to thee? What have they done?"

"Done to me?" repeated Magda in puzzled tones. "Oh, I see! I'm thinner. I've been ill, you know," she said, smiling.

"It is not—that! Hast thou looked in the glass? Oh, *ma pauvre!*" And the old Frenchwoman incontinently began to weep.

A glass! Magda had not seen her own reflection in a looking-glass since the day she left Friars' Holm. There were no mirrors hanging on the walls

of the house where the Sisters of Penitence dwelt. Filled with a nameless, inexplicable terror, she turned and walked out of the room. There was an old Chippendale mirror hanging at its further end, but she avoided it. Something in the askance expression of Virginie's eyes had frightened her so that she dared not challenge what the mirror might give back until she was alone.

Once outside the door she flew upstairs to her own room and, locking the door, went to the glass. A stifled exclamation of dismay escaped her. She had not dreamed a year could compass such an alteration! Then, very deliberately, she removed her hat and, standing where the light fell full upon her, she examined her reflection. After a long moment she spoke, whisperingly, beneath her breath.

"Why—why—it isn't me, at all! I'm ugly! Ugly!"

With a quick movement she lifted her arm, screening her face against it for a moment.

Her startled eyes had exaggerated the change absurdly. Nevertheless, that a change had taken place was palpable. The arresting radiance, the vivid physical perfection of her, had gone. She was thin, and with the thinness had come lines—lines of fatigue, and other, more lasting lines, born of endurance and self-control.

The pliant symmetry of her figure, too, was marred. She stooped a little; the gay, free carriage of her shoulders was gone. The heavy manual work at the sisterhood of which, in common with the others, she had done her share, had taken its toll of her suppleness and grace, and the hands she extended in front of her, regarding them distastefully, were roughened and worn by the unwonted usage to which they had been subjected. Her hair, so long hidden from the light and air by the veil she had worn, was flaccid and lusterless. Only her eyes had remained unchangedly



Only her eyes had remained unchangedly beautiful. Splendid and miserable, they stared back at the reflection which the mirror yielded.

beautiful. Splendid and miserable, they stared back at the reflection which the mirror yielded.

It was a long time before Magda reappeared downstairs, so long, indeed, that Gillian was beginning to grow nervously uneasy. When at last she came, she was curiously quiet and responded to all Gillian's attempts at conversation with a dull, flat indifference which was strangely at variance with the spontaneously happy excitement which had attended the first few moments after her arrival.

Gillian was acutely conscious of the difference in her manner, but even she, with all her intuition, failed to attribute it to its rightful cause. To her, Magda was so indubitably, essentially the Magda she loved that she was hardly sensible of that shadowing of her radiant beauty

which had revealed itself with a merciless clarity to the dancer herself. And such change as she observed she ascribed to recent illness.

Meanwhile Magda got through that first evening at Friars' Holm as best she might. The house seemed interminable. She was aching for night to come, so that she might be alone with her thoughts, alone to realize and face this new thing which had befallen her.

She had lost her beauty! The one precious gift she had to give to Michael, that lover of all beauty! The knowledge seemed to beat against her brain, throbbing and pulsing like a wound, while she made a pretense at doing justice to the little *dîner de fête*, which had been specially concocted for her under Virginia's watchful eye, and responded in some sort to Coppertop's periodic outbreaks of jubilation over her return.

But the moment of release came at length. A final good-night kiss to Gillian on the landing outside her bedroom door, and then a nerve-racking hour while Virginia fussed over her "*petit chou*," undressing her and preparing her for bed with the same tender care she had devoted to the *bébé* she had nursed and tended more than twenty years ago.

It was over at last.

"*Dors bien, ma mie. Sleep well!*" And Virginia switched off the electric light as she pattered out of the room, leaving Magda alone in the cool dark, with the silken softness of *crêpe de Chine* once more caressing her slender limbs and the fineness of lavender-scented linen smooth against her cheek.

The ease and comfort and well-being of it all! Yet this first night, passed in the familiar luxury which had lapped her round since childhood was a harder, more bitter night than any of the preceding three hundred and sixty-five she had spent tossing weary, aching limbs on a lumpy straw mattress with a coarse brown woolen blanket drawn up beneath her chin, vexing her satin skin.

For each of those nights had counted as a step onward along the hard road which was to lead her back eventually to Michael. Now she knew that they had all been endured in vain. Spiritually her self-elected year of discipline might have fitted her to be the wife of "Saint Michael." But the undimmed physical beauty and charm which Michael, the man and the artist, would crave in the woman he loved, was gone.

The recognition of these things rushed over her, overwhelming her with a sense of blank and utter failure. It meant the end of everything. As far as she was concerned, life henceforward held nothing more. There was nothing to hope for in the future—except to hope that Michael might never see her again! At least, she would like to feel that his memory of her, of the Wielitzka whose lithe grace and beauty had swept him headlong even against the tide of his convictions, would remain forever unmarred.

It was a rather touching, human little weakness—the weakness and prayer of many a woman who has lost her lover. Let him remember her—always—as she was before the radiance of youth faded, before grief or pain blurred the perfection which had been hers!

Perhaps for Magda the wish was even stronger, more insistent by reason of the fact that her beauty had been of so fine and rare a quality, setting her in a way apart from other women.

With the instinct of the wounded wild creature, she longed to hide—to hide herself from Michael so that she might never see in his eyes that look of quickly veiled disappointment which she knew would spring into them as he realized the change in her. She felt she could not bear that. It would be like a sword thrust through her heart. Better if she had never left the sisterhood!

Suddenly every nerve of her tautened. Supposing—supposing she returned

there, never to emerge again! No chance encounter could ever then bring her within sight or sound of Michael. She would be spared watching the old, eager look of admiration fade suddenly from the gray eyes she loved.

Hour after hour she lay there, dry-eyed, staring into the darkness. And with the dawn her decision was made.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"You shan't do it!"

When first Magda had bruited her idea of rejoining the sisterhood—the decision which had crystallized out of the long black hours of the night of her return to Friars' Holm—Gillian had merely laughed the notion aside, attaching little importance to it. But now, a week later, when Magda reverted to the subject with a certain purposeful definiteness, she grew suddenly frightened.

"Do you want to throw away every possibility of happiness?" she demanded indignantly. "Just because Michael isn't here, waiting for you on the doorstep, so to speak, you decide to rush off and make it impossible for him ever to see you again!"

Magda kept her head bent, refusing to meet the other's eyes.

"I don't want him to see me now," she said shrinkingly. "I'm not—not the Magda he knew any longer."

"That's an absurd exaggeration. You're not looking very well, that's all," retorted Gillian with her usual practical common sense. "You can't suppose that would make any difference to Michael! It didn't make any to me," she added, smiling. "I'm only too glad to have you back at any price!"

Magda's faint, responsive smile was touched with that bitter knowledge which is the heritage of the woman who has been much loved for her beauty.

"You're a woman, Gillyflower," she said. "And Michael is not only a man, but an artist-man. Men don't want you

when the bloom has been brushed off. And you know how Michael worships beauty! He's bound to, being an artist."

"I think you're morbidly self-conscious," declared Gillian firmly. "I suppose it's the result of being out of the world for so long. You've lost all sense of proportion. You're quite lovely enough, now, to satisfy most people!" She smiled at Magda affectionately. "You only look rather tired and worn out."

But Magda's face remained clouded.

"But even that isn't—all," she answered. "It's—oh, it's a heap of things! Somehow I thought when I came back I should see the road clear. But it isn't. It's all shadowed, just as it was before. I thought I should have so much to give Michael now. And I haven't anything. I don't think I ever quite realized before that, however much you try to atone, you can never *undo* the harm you've done. But I've had time to think things out while I was with the sisters."

"And if you go back to them, you'll have time to do nothing but think for the rest of your life!" flashed back Gillian.

"Oh, no!" Magda spoke quickly. "I shouldn't return under a vow of penitence. There are working sisters attached to the community who go about among the sick and poor in the slums. I should join as a working sister if I went back."

Gillian stared at her in amazement. Magda devoting her life to good works seemed altogether out of the picture! She began to feel that the whole affair was getting too complicated for her to handle, and, as usual, when in a difficulty, she put the matter up to Lady Arabella.

The latter, with her accumulated wisdom of seventy years, saw more clearly than the younger woman, although even she hardly understood that sense of the deadly emptiness and failure of her life

which had overwhelmed Magda since her return to Friars' Holm. But the old woman realized that she had passed through a long period of strain, and that, now the reaction had come, the Vallin-court blood in her might drive her into almost any extreme of conduct.

"If only Michael were on the spot!" she burst out irritably. "I own I'm disappointed in the man! I was so sure six months would bring him to his senses."

"I know," assented Gillian miserably. "It's—it's"—laughing a little helplessly—"the most hopeless state of things imaginable!"

Lady Arabella's interview with Magda herself proved unproductive.

"Have you written to Michael?" she demanded.

"Written to him?" A flash of the old defiant spirit sounded in Magda's voice. "No, nor shall I."

"Don't be a fool, child. He's probably learned something during this last twelve months—as well as you! Don't let pride get in your way now."

"It's not—pride," Magda answered slowly. "Marraine, I never knew—I never thought— Look at me!" she cried, with sudden passion. "What have I to give Michael now? Have you forgotten that he's an artist and that beauty means everything to him?"

"Well?"

"'Well!' " Magda held out her hands. "Can't you see that I'm changed? Michael wouldn't want me to pose for him as Circe, now!"

"He wanted you for a wife, not a model, my dear," Lady Arabella said coolly. "You can buy models at so much the hour."

"Oh, Marraine! You won't understand!"

Lady Arabella took the slender, work-roughened hands in hers.

"Perhaps I understand better than you think," she said quietly. "There are other ways of assessing life than merely in terms of beauty. And you can be-

lieve this, too: you've lost nothing from the point of view of looks that a few months of normal healthy life won't set right. Moreover, if you'd grown as plain as a pikestaff, I don't think Michael would care twopence! He's an artist, I know. He can't help that." Again the little grim smile. "But he's a man first. And he's a man who knows how to love. Promise me one thing," she went on insistently. "Promise that you'll do nothing definite—yet. Not, at least, without consulting me."

Magda hesitated.

"Very well. I'll do nothing without telling you first."

That was the utmost concession Magda would make, and with that her godmother had to be content.

The same evening a letter in Lady Arabella's spirited, angular handwriting sped on its way to Paris. It read in part:

If you're not absolutely determined to ruin both your own and Magda's lives, my dear Michael, put your pride and your ridiculous principles in your pocket and come back to England. I don't happen to be a grandmother, but I'm quite old enough for the job, so you might pay my advice due respect by taking it.

"I thought I was shelved altogether."

Thus spoke Dan Storrان, rather crossly, when, a day or two later, he met Gillian by appointment for lunch at their favorite little restaurant in Soho. It was the first time she had been able to fix up a meeting with him since Magda's return, as, naturally, his customary visits to Friars' Holm were out of the question now.

"Well, you expected my time to be pretty well occupied the first week or two after Magda came back, didn't you?" countered Gillian.

She smiled as she spoke and proceeded leisurely to draw off her gloves, while Storrان signaled to a waiter.

She was really very glad to see him again. There was something so solid

and dependable about him, and she felt it would be very comforting to confide in him her anxieties concerning Magda. Not that she anticipated he would have any particular compassion to bestow upon the latter. But she was femininely aware that, inasmuch as Magda's affairs were disturbing her peace of mind, he would listen to them with sympathetic attention and probably, out of the depths of his man's consciousness, produce some quite sound and serviceable advice.

Being a wise woman, however, she did not launch out into immediate explanation, but waited for him to work off his own individual grumble at not having seen her recently, trusting to the perfectly cooked little lunch to exercise a tranquillizing effect.

It was not until they had reached the cigarette-and-coffee stage of the proceedings that she allowed a small, well-considered sigh to escape her and drift away into the silence which had fallen between them.

Storrان glanced across at her with suddenly observant eyes.

"What is it?" he asked quickly. "You look worried. Are you?"

She nodded silently.

"And here I've been grousing away about my own affairs all the time! Why didn't you stop me?"

"You know I'm interested in your affairs," Gillian said, smiling.

"And I'm interested in yours," he answered decisively. "What's bothering you, Gillian? Tell me."

"Magda," said Gillian simply.

She was rather surprised to observe that Dan's face did not, as usual, darken at the mere mention of Magda's name.

"I saw her the other day," he said quietly. "I was in the park and she drove by."

Gillian felt that there was something more to come. She waited in silence.

"She has altered very much," he went

on bluntly. Then, after a moment: "I felt—sorry for her."

"You did, Dan?" Gillian's face lit up. "I'm glad. I've always hated your being so down on her."

With an abrupt movement he jabbed the glowing stub of his cigarette on to an ash try, pressing it down until it went out. Then, taking out his case, he lit another before replying.

"I shan't be 'down on her' any more," he said at last. "I never guessed she'd felt things—like that."

"No. No one did. I don't suppose even Magda herself knew she could ever go through all she has done just for an ideal."

Then very quietly, very simply and touchingly, she told him the story of all that had happened, of Magda's final intention to become a working member of the sisterhood, and of Lady Arabella's letter summoning Michael back to England.

"But even when he comes," added Gillian, "unless he is very careful—unless he loves her in the biggest way a man can love, so that *nothing else matters*, he'll lose her. He'll have to convince her that she means just that to him."

Storran was silent for a long time, and when at last he spoke it was with an obvious effort.

"Listen," he said. "There's something you don't know. Perhaps when I've told you, you won't have anything more to say to me—I don't know."

Gillian opened her lips in quick disclaimer, but he motioned her to be silent.

"Wait," he said. "Wait till you've heard what I have to say. You think, and Magda thinks, that June died of a broken heart—at least that the shock of all that miserable business down at Stockleigh helped to kill her."

"Yes." Gillian assented mechanically when he paused.

"I thought so, too, once. It was what June's sister told me—told every one.

But it wasn't true. She believed it, I know—probably believes it to this day. But, thank God, it wasn't true!"

"How can you tell? All that strain and heartbreak just at a time when she wasn't strong—oh, Dan! We can never be sure—sure!"

"I am sure. Quite sure," he said steadily. "When I came to my senses out there in Frisco, I couldn't rest under that letter from June's sister. It burned into me like a red-hot iron. I was half mad with pain, I think. I wrote to the doctor who had attended her. But I got no answer. Then I sailed for England, determined to find and see the man for myself. I found him. My letter had miscarried somehow. And he told me that June could not have lived. There were certain complications in her case which made it impossible. In fact, if she had been so happy that she had longed to live—and *tried* to—it would only have made it harder for her, a rougher journey to travel. As it was, she went easily, without fighting death—letting go, without any effort, her hold on life."

He ceased, and after a moment's silence Gillian spoke in strained, horror-stricken tones.

"And you never told us! Oh! It was cruel of you, Dan! You would have spared Magda an infinity of self-reproach!"

"I didn't want to spare her," he said grimly. "I left her in ignorance on purpose. I wanted her to be punished—to suffer as she had made me suffer."

There were tears in Gillian's eyes. It was terrible to her that Dan could be so bitter, so vengefully cruel. Yet she recognized that it had been but the natural outcome of the man's primitive nature to pay back good for good and evil for evil.

"Then why do you tell me now?" she asked at last.

"Why," he said slowly, "because



"Monsieur Quarrington?
But he has been gone
from here two—no, three
months. Perhaps Ma-
dame did not know?"

you've beaten me—you with your sweetness and courage and tolerance. You've taught me that retribution and punishment are best left in more merciful hands than ours."

Gillian's hand went out to meet his.

"Oh, Dan, I'm so glad!" she said simply.

He kept her hand in his a moment, then released it gently.

"Well, you can tell her now," he said awkwardly.

"I?" Gillian smiled a little. "No. I want you to tell her. Don't you see, Dan," she hurried on, as she sensed his impulse to refuse, "it will make all the difference to Magda if you and she are—square with each other? She's overweighted. She's been carrying a bigger burden than she can bear.

Michael comes first, of course; but there's been her treatment of you, as well. June, too. And—and other things. And it's crushing her. No, you must tell her."

"I will, if you say **I must**. But," he said morosely, "she won't forgive me easily."

"I think she will," Gillian replied quietly. "I think she'll understand just what made you do it. 'So now we'll go back to Friars' Holm together.'"

An hour later Storran came slowly downstairs from the little room where he and Magda had met again for the first time since that moonlit night at Stockleigh—met, not as lovers, but as a man and woman who have each sinned and each learned, out of their sinning, how to pardon and forgive.

Storran was very quiet and grave when presently he found himself alone with Gillian.

"We men will never understand women," he said. "There's an angel hidden away somewhere in every one of you." His mouth curved into a smile half sad, half whimsical. "I've just found Magda's."

Lady Arabella and Gillian, both feeling rather like conspirators, waited anxiously for a reply to the former's letter to Quarrington. But none came. The time slipped by until a fortnight had elapsed, and with the passage of each day their hearts sank lower.

Neither of them believed that Michael would have utterly disregarded the letter, had he received it, but they feared that it might have miscarried, or that he might be traveling and so not receive it in time to prevent Magda's carrying out her avowed intention of becoming a working member of the sisterhood.

Even though she knew now that at least June Storran's death need no longer be added to her account, she still adhered to her decision. As she had told Dan, with a weary simplicity: "I'm

glad. But it won't make any difference—to Michael or me. Too much water has run under the bridge. Love that is dead doesn't come to life again."

Each day was hardening her resolve, and both Lady Arabella and Gillian, those two whose unselfish happiness was bound up in her own, were beginning to realize that it would be a race against time if she was to be saved from taking a step that would divide her from Michael as long as they both should live.

At the end of a fortnight Gillian, driven to desperation, dispatched a telegram to his Paris address:

Did you receive communication from Lady Arabella?

But it shared the fate of the letter, failing to elicit any reply. She allowed sufficient time to elapse to cover any ordinary delay in transit, then, unknown to Magda, taxied down to the house in Park Lane.

"I want you to invite Magda to stay with you, please," she informed Lady Arabella abruptly.

The latter regarded her flushed cheeks and the unusual brightness of her brown eyes interestedly.

"Of course I will," she replied. "But why? You've got a reason."

Gillian nodded.

"Yes," she acknowledged quietly. "I'm going to Paris—to find Michael."

Lady Arabella, whose high spirit had wilted a little in the face of the double disappointment regarding any answer from Quarrington, beamed satisfaction.

"You blessed child!" she exclaimed. "I'd have gone myself, but my old body is so stiff with rheumatism that I don't believe they'd get me on board the boat except in an ambulance!"

"Well, I'm going," said Gillian. "Only the point is, Magda mustn't know. If she thought I was going off in pursuit of Michael," she said, laughing a little, "I believe she'd lock me up in the cellar. She intends never to let him

see her again. Melrose will manage about the letters, and somehow you've got to prevent Magda from coming up to Friars' Holm and finding out that I'm not there."

"I'll take her away with me," declared Lady Arabella. "Rheumatism—Harrogate," she said solemnly. "It's quite simple."

Gillian heaved a sigh of relief.

"Yes. That would be a good plan," she agreed. "Then I'd let you know when we should arrive."

"We?"

"Michael and I," said Gillian simply. "I'm not coming back without him. And you could bring Magda straight back to town with you."

Lady Arabella's keen old eyes searched her face.

"You sound very certain of success. Supposing you find Michael still unforgiving, and he refuses to return with you?"

"I believe in Michael," replied Gillian steadily. "He's made mistakes. People in love do. But when he knows all that Magda has endured—for his sake, really—why, he'll come back. I'm sure of it."

"I don't know, my dear. I was sure he would come back within six months. But you see, I was wrong. Men are kittle cattle, and often very slow to arrive at the intrinsic value and significance of things. A woman jumps to it while a man is crawling round on his hands and knees in the dark, looking for it with a match."

Gillian laughed and got up to go, and Lady Arabella, whose rheumatism was quite real at the moment, rose rather painfully and hobbled down the room beside her, her thin, delicate old hand resting on the silver knob of a tall, ebony walking stick.

"Now, remember," urged Gillian. "Magda mustn't have the least suspicion Michael may be coming back, or she'd be off into her slums before you

could stop her. Whatever happens, you've got to prevent her rushing back to the Sisters of Penitence."

"Only over my dead body, my dear," Lady Arabella assured her determinedly. "She shan't go any other way."

So Gillian returned to Friars' Holm bearing with her a note from Lady Arabella in which she asked her goddaughter to pay her a visit. In it, however, the wily old lady made no mention of her further idea of going to Harrogate, lest it should militate against an acceptance of the invitation.

Magda demurred a little at first, but Gillian, suddenly endowed with diplomacy worthy of a Machiavelli, pointed out that if she really had any intention of ultimately withdrawing into a community the least she could do was to give her godmother the happiness of spending a few days with her.

"She will only urge me to give up the idea all the time," protested Magda. "And I've quite made up my mind. The sooner I can get away from—from everything"—she looked round her with desperate, haunted eyes—"the better it will be."

Gillian's impulse to combat her decision to rejoin the sisterhood died on her lips. It was useless to argue the matter. There was only one person in the world who could save Magda from herself, and that was Michael. The main point was to concentrate on getting him back to England, rather than waste her energies upon what she knew beforehand must prove a fruitless argument.

"I'll go to Marraine for a couple of nights, anyway," said Magda at last. "After that I want to make arrangements for my reception into the sisterhood."

Gillian returned no answer. She felt her heart contract at the quiet decision in Magda's voice, but she pinned her faith on Lady Arabella's ability to hold her, somehow, till she herself had accomplished her errand to Paris.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Gillian, dashing headlong into Charing Cross Station, encountered Storrان sauntering leisarely out of it, a newspaper under his arm.

"Where are you off to?" he demanded, stopping abruptly. "You look as if you were in a hurry."

"I am. Don't stop me! I'm catching the boat train."

Storrان pulled out his watch as he turned and fell into step beside her.

"Then you've got a good half hour to spare. No hurry," he returned placidly.

Gillian glanced at the watch on her wrist.

"Are you sure?" she asked doubtfully. "If so, my watch must be altogether wrong!"

"Unbeliever! Come and look at the clock. And, incidentally, give me that suit case."

She yielded up the case obediently and, having verified the time, proceeded toward the platform at a more reasonable gait.

Storrان, his long legs leisurely keeping pace with her shorter ones, smiled down at her.

"And now, for the second time of asking, where are you off to?"

"I'm going to France—to fetch Michael."

He gave a quick exclamation, whether of surprise or disapproval she was not quite sure.

"You haven't heard from him, then?"

"No," she answered soberly. "And unless something happens quick, it will be too late."

"But if he were at his studio he would surely have answered Lady Arabella's letter."

"Yes, I suppose so," replied Gillian absently, her eyes following the queue of passengers passing through the gate on to the platform. By mutual consent they had come to a standstill outside it.

"Then, if he isn't there, what's the use of your rushing over to Paris?" protested Storrان. "It's absurd! An absolute wild-goose chase! You can't go!"

Gillian's brown eyes came back to his face.

"But I'm going," she said calmly.

He frowned.

"If Michael's not at his studio he may be—anywhere!"

She nodded.

"I know. If so, I shall follow—anywhere."

Storrان looked down at her and read the quiet determination in her face.

"Then let me come, too," he said.

"Sort of courier, you know. I'd just be at hand in case of a tangle."

"Oh, no! I couldn't let you. There's not the least need. Good heavens! I'm not a baby!"

There was a curious softness in Dan's blue eyes as they rested on her.

"No. I think you're a very good friend," he said. "But I don't see why you should have a monopoly! Let me show I know how to be a good pal, too, if I want to."

"No, no." Gillian still protested, but her tone betrayed signs of weakening.

"We'll be as conventional as you like," urged Dan, twinkling. "I'd stop at different hotels."

"Well, but——"

"Say 'yes!' " he insisted.

Gillian smiled.

"You obstinate person! Yes, then!"

"Thank you. Then I'll go along and buy a ticket."

He turned and went toward the booking office, while Gillian, inwardly much relieved, awaited his return. She could not but acknowledge that in the "wild-goose chase" upon which she was embarking it would be an enormous comfort to have Storrان at hand in case of an emergency. As to the proprieties—well, Gillian's was far too honest and independent a soul to worry about them in the circumstances. Her friend's hap-

piness was at stake. And whether people chose to talk because she and Dan Storrان traveled to Paris together, or to Timbaktu, for the matter of that, if Michael had chanced to depart thither!—troubled her not at all.

When Storrان rejoined her a much more practical consideration presented itself to her mind.

"But, my dear man, you can't fly with me to Paris without even a toothbrush! I'd forgotten you'd no luggage!"

Her face fell as she spoke. But Storrان dismissed the matter with a smile.

"Oh, I can buy clean collars and shirts as I go along," he replied, entirely unruffled. "The dickens was to get on to the train at all! They assured me there wasn't a seat. However, I make a point of never believing official statements, on principle."

And as a consequence of such well-directed incredulity, Storrان accompanied Gillian to Dover and thence to Calais.

They had a good crossing, sunup and blue sky. Looking back, afterward, it always seemed to Gillian as if the short time it occupied had been a merciful breathing space, a tranquil interval, specially vouchsafed, in which she was able to brace herself for the coming race against time. Just as long as they were on board, nothing she could do was of any importance whatever, either to help or hinder the fulfillment of her errand. She could not quicken the speed of the boat by a single throb of its engine. So, like a sensible woman, she sat on deck with Dan and enjoyed herself amazingly.

Afterward, in quick succession, came the stir and bustle of landing and the journey to Paris. They arrived too late to make any inquiries that night, but ten o'clock the following morning found them outside the building where Michael had his *appartement*.

"Oh, Dan!" Gillian was seized with sudden panic. "Supposing he is here,

after all, and has deliberately not answered Lady Arabella's letter?"

"I shouldn't suppose anything so foolish. Michael may be many kinds of a fool—artists very often are, I believe; it's part of the temperament," said Dan, with a smile which helped to cheer Gillian in spite of herself. "But whatever he proposed to do regarding Magda, there's no reason in the world to suppose he wouldn't answer Lady Arabella's letter."

"No, no. Perhaps not," agreed Gillian hurriedly. But it was in rather a shaky voice that she asked to see Mr. Quarrington, when finally they found themselves confronted by the concierge.

"Monsieur Quarrington?" Hands, shoulders, and eyebrows all seemed to gesticulate at once as *madame la concierge* made answer. "But he has been gone from here two—no, three months. Perhaps madame did not know?"

"No," said Gillian. "I didn't know. But I thought he might possibly be away, because I—I have had no answer to a letter I wrote him."

"*Tiens!* What misfortune!"

The concierge regarded Gillian with a pair of shrewd, gimlet eyes while a stream of inquiry and comment issued from her lips. Madame was the sister of monsieur, perhaps? Truly, they resembled each other! One could see it at a glance. No, not a sister? Ah, a friend, then? And there had been no answer to a letter! But monsieur had left an address. Oh, yes. And all letters were forwarded. She herself saw to that.

At last Gillian managed to stem the torrent of garrulity and interpose a question concerning the telegram she had sent.

A telegram! Now that was another affair altogether. Yes, the concierge remembered the telegram. She had opened it to see if it were of life or death importance, in which case she would

have, of course, telegraphed its contents to monsieur at his present address.

Gillian was nearly crying with impatience as the woman's voluble tongue ran on complacently.

"Then you did send it on?" she managed to interpolate at last.

The letter—yes. Not, of course, the telegram. That would have been a needless expense, seeing that monsieur would already have had the letter, since all letters were sent on. All! She, Madame Ribot, could vouch for that.

At the end of half an hour Gillian succeeded in extracting Michael's address from amid the plethora of words and, bidding the voluble concierge *bonjour*, she and Storran beat a masterly retreat.

It appeared that Michael had been commissioned to paint the portrait of some Italian society beauty and had gone to Rome. Gillian screwed up her small face resolutely.

"I shall go to Rome," she announced succinctly. There was a definite defiance in her tone, and Storran concealed a smile.

"Of course you will," he replied composedly. "Just as well I came with you, isn't it?" he added with great cheerfulness.

Her expression relaxed.

"You really are rather a nice person, Dan," she allowed graciously. "I was horribly afraid you'd suggest wiring Michael again, or something silly like that. I'm not going to trust to anything of that kind."

Accordingly, the only wire dispatched was one to Lady Arabella, informing her as to their movements, and a few hours later found Dan and Gillian rushing across Europe as fast as the thunderous whirl of the express could take them. They traveled day and night, and it was a very weary Gillian who at last opened her eyes to the golden sunshine of Italy.

At the hotel whither Madame Ribot had directed them, fresh disappointment awaited them. When he found that the two dusty and somewhat disheveled-looking travelers who presented themselves at the inquiry bureau were actually friends of Signor Quarrington, the famous English artist who had stayed at his hotel, the manager was desolated. The signor had departed a month ago! Had he the address? But assuredly. He would write it down for the *signora*.

"He's in Normandy!" exclaimed Gillian in tones of bitter disappointment. "At—what's the name of the place?—Armanches? Oh, Dan! We've got to go right back to Paris again and then on to the coast."

Her face was full of anxiety. This would mean at least a delay of several days before they could possibly see Michael, and meanwhile it was a moot question as to how much longer Lady Arabella could restrain Magda from taking definite steps with regard to joining the sisterhood.

Storran nodded.

"Yes," he said quietly. "But all the same, you'll not start back till to-morrow."

"Oh, I must!" interrupted Gillian. "We can't afford to waste a moment."

He glanced down at her and shook his head. Her face was white and drawn, and there were deep violet shadows underneath her eyes. Suspense and her anxious impatience had told upon her, and she had slept but little on the journey. And now, with the addition of this last, totally unexpected disappointment, she looked as if she could not stand much more.

"We can afford to waste a single day better than we can afford the three or four which it would cost us if you collapsed en route," said Storran.

"I shan't collapse," she protested with white lips.

"So much the better. But all the

same, you'll stay here till to-morrow and get a good night's rest."

"I shouldn't sleep," she urged. "Let's go right on, Dan. Let's go——"

But the sentence was never finished. Quite suddenly she swayed, stretching out her hands with a blind, groping movement. Dan was just in time to catch her in his arms as she toppled over in a dead faint.

It was a week later when, in the early morning, a rather wan and white-faced Gillian sprang up from her seat as the train ran into Bayeux.

"Thank goodness we're here at last!" she exclaimed.

Storran put out his hand to steady her as the train jolted to a standstill.

"Yes, we're here at last," he said. "Now to find a vehicle of some description to take us out to Armanches."

As he had suggested it would, Gillian's collapse had delayed them some time. Probably she had caught a slight chill while traveling, and that, together with the sheer fatigue from which she was suffering, combined to keep her in bed at the hotel in Rome for a couple of days.

When the slight feverishness had abated, she slept the greater part of the time, her weary body exacting the price for all those wakeful hours she had passed on the train. But it was not until four days had elapsed that Dan would agree to a resumption of the journey. Even then, consent was only wrung from him by the fear that she would fret herself ill over any further delay. He did not consider her by any means fit to travel. But Gillian was game to the core, and they had reached Bayeux without further contretemps.

"The thing that puzzles me," she said, as they started on the seven-mile drive from Bayeux to Armanches, "is why Michael didn't send his Normandy address to Madame Ribot. We should



"You are an artist before everything, Michael," she said. "Look—look well!"

have been saved all that long journey to Rome if he had."

"Perhaps he intended to, and forgot," suggested Dan. "Artists are proverbially absent-minded."

But Gillian shook her head with a dissatisfied air. Michael was not of the absent-minded type.

Armanches was a tiny place on the Normandy coast, in reality not much more than a fishing village; but its possession of a beautiful *plage*, smooth, fine golden sands, brought many visitors to the old-fashioned hostelry it boasted.

The landlady, a smiling, rosy-cheeked woman, with a chubby little brown-faced son hiding shy embarrassment behind her ample skirts, greeted the travelers hospitably. But when they mentioned Quarrington's name a look of sym-

thetic concern overspread her comely face.

Yes, he was there. And, of course, madame could not know, but he had been ill, seriously ill with grippe—taken ill the very day he had arrived, nearly a month ago. He had a nurse. Oh, yes. One had come from Bayeux. But this influenza! It was a veritable scourge. One was here to-day and gone to-morrow. However, Monsieur Quarrington was recovering, the saints be praised! Monsieur and madame wished to see him? The good woman looked doubtful. She would inquire. What name? Grey? But there was then a telegram awaiting madame.

Gillian's face blanched as the landlady bustled away in search of the wire. Had Magda already— Oh, but that was impossible! Lady Arabella was in charge at that end, and Gillian had a great belief in Lady Arabella's capacity to deal with any crisis that might arise. Nevertheless, they had wired her the Normandy address from Rome, in case of necessity. The next moment Gillian had torn open the telegram and she and Dan were reading it together.

Magda insists we return London on Wednesday. She has completed preliminary arrangements to join sisterhood, and goes there Thursday. Impossible to dissuade her.

ARABELLA WINTER.

Gillian's mouth set itself in a straight line of determination as her eyes raced along the score or so of pregnant words. She was silent a moment. Then she met Storran's questioning glance.

"We can just do it," she said steadily. "To-day is Wednesday. By crossing to Southampton to-night, we can make London to-morrow."

Without waiting for his reply, she entered the inn and ran quickly up the stairs which the landlady had already ascended.

"But, madame, I am not sure that monsieur will receive any one," pro-

tested the astonished woman, turning round as Gillian caught up with her.

"I must see him," asserted Gillian quietly.

Perhaps something in the tense young face touched a sympathetic chord in the Frenchwoman's honest heart. She scented romance, and when she emerged from the invalid's room her face was wreathed in smiles.

"It is all arranged. Will madame please to enter?"

A moment later Gillian found herself standing in front of a tall, gaunt figure of a man, whose coat hung loosely from his shoulders, and whose face was worn and haggard with something more than grippe alone.

"Oh, Michael!"

A little, stricken cry broke from her lips. What men and women make each other suffer! She realized it as she met the stark, bitter misery of the gray eyes which burned at her out of the thin face and remembered the look on Magda's own face when she had last seen her.

She went straight to the point without a word of greeting or of explanation. There was no time for explanations, except the only one that mattered.

"Michael, why didn't you answer Lady Arabella's letter—or my telegram?"

He stared at her. Then he passed his hand wearily across his forehead.

"Letter? I don't remember any letter."

"She wrote to you about a month ago. I know the letter was forwarded on to Rome. It must have followed you here."

"A month ago?" he repeated.

Then a light broke over his face. He turned and crossed the room to where a small pile of letters lay on a table, dusty and forgotten.

"Perhaps it's here," he said. "I was taken ill as soon as I arrived. I never even sent this address to the concierge at Paris. I believe I was off my head

part of the time—"flu" plays the deuce with you. But I remember now. The nurse told me there were some letters which had come while I was ill. I didn't bother about them."

While he spoke he was turning over the envelopes, one by one, in a desultory fashion.

"Yes. This is Lady Arabella's writing." He paused and looked across at Gillian.

"Will you read it, please?" she said. "And— Oh, you ought to sit down! You don't look very strong yet."

He smiled a little.

"I'm not quite such a crook as I look. But won't you sit down yourself while I read this letter? Is it of importance?"

"Oh! Please read it!" exclaimed Gillian, with sudden nervous impatience.

It seemed to her an eternity while he read the letter. But at last he looked up from its perusal.

"Well?" she asked under her breath.

Very deliberately he refolded the sheet of note paper and slipped it back into its envelope.

"It would have made no difference if I had received it earlier," he said composedly.

"No difference?"

"None. Because, you see, this letter, asking me to go back to Magda, is written under a misapprehension."

"How? What do you mean?"

"I mean," he said quietly, "that Magda has—no further use for me."

Gillian leaned forward.

"You're wrong," she said tersely. "Quite wrong."

"No." He shook his head. "I'm not blaming her. Looking back, I'm not even very much surprised. But still, the fact remains, she has no further use for me."

"Will you tell me what makes you think that?" With an effort Gillian forced herself to speak quietly and composedly.

He was silent a moment, staring out

of the window at the gay blue sea beyond, sparkling in the morning sunlight. All at once he swung round on her, his face wrung with a sudden agony.

"I know," he said in a roughened voice. "I know, because I wrote to her—six months ago. I was hard, I know, brutally hard to her that last day at Friars' Holm. But—God! I paid for it afterward! And I wrote to her—bared my very soul to her! Wrote so that if she had ever cared she must, at least, have answered me."

He stopped abruptly, his face working.

"And she didn't answer?"

A wry smile twisted his lips.

"I got my own letter back," he said quietly. "After all, that was an answer—a conclusive one."

Gillian was thinking rapidly. Six months ago! A momentary flash of recollection came to her. So Lady Arabella, that wise old citizen of the world, had been quite right, after all! She had given Michael six months to find out his imperative need of Magda. And he had found it. Only—something had gone wrong.

"Magda never had that letter," she said quietly, at last.

She was gradually beginning to piece together the separate parts of the puzzle. All letters which came for Magda had been forwarded on to the sisterhood, and had she herself readdressed this of Michael's she would have recognized the handwriting. But probably she had been away from home, or had chanced to be out at post time, in which case Melrose, or old Virginie, would have readdressed the envelope and dropped it into the pillar box at the corner of the road.

Then, as was the case with any correspondence addressed to one of the Sisters of Penitence, the letter would be read by the mother superior and passed on to its destined recipient if she thought good. If not—

Gillian had learned a great deal about Catherine Vallincourt by now, both from Lady Arabella and from Magda herself, who before leaving the community had discovered the identity of its head. And she could visualize the stern, fanatical woman, obsessed by her idea of disciplining Magda and of counteracting the effects of her brother's marriage with Diane Wielitzka, opening the letter, and, after persual, calmly sealing it up in its envelope again and returning it to the sender.

"Magda never had that letter, Michael," she repeated. "Listen!" And then, without preamble, but with every word vibrant with pity for the whole tragedy, she poured out the story of Magda's passionate repentance and atonement, of her impetuous adoption of her father's remorseless theory, mistaken though it might be, that pain is the remedy for sin, and of the utter, hopeless despair which had overwhelmed her now that she believed it had all proved unavailing.

"She has come to believe that you don't want her—never could want her, Michael—because she has failed so much."

There was more than one reproach mingled with the story, but Michael made no protest. It was only when she had finished that Gillian could read in his tortured eyes all that her narrative had cost him.

"Yes," he said at last. "It's true. I wanted the impossible. I was looking for a goddess, not a woman. But now I want—just a woman, Gillian."

"Then, if you want her, you must save her from herself. You've just twenty-four hours to do it in. Tomorrow she's still Magda. The next day she'll be Sister Somebody. And you'll have lost her."

Half an hour later, when Michael's nurse returned, she found her patient packing a suit case with the assistance of a pretty, brown-haired girl whose

eyes shone with the unmistakable brightness of recent tears.

"But you're not fit to travel!" she protested in horrified dismay. "You mustn't think of it, Mr. Quarrington."

But Michael only laughed at her, defying her good-humoredly.

"If the man you loved were waiting for you in England, nurse, you know you'd go—and you wouldn't care a hang whether you were fit to travel or not!"

The nurse smiled in spite of herself. "No," she admitted. "I suppose I shouldn't."

As the Havre-Southampton boat steamed through the moonlit night, Dan and Gillian were pacing the deck together.

"I'm so glad Michael is going back to Magda without knowing about—about June," said Gillian, coming to a standstill beside the deck rail. "Going back just because his love is too big for anything else to matter now!"

"Haven't you told him?" Storran's voice held surprise.

"No. I decided not to. I should like Magda to tell him that herself."

They were both silent for a little while. Gillian bent over the rail, looking down at the phosphorescent water breaking away from the steamer's bow. Suddenly a big hand covered hers.

"I think I'm—lonely," said Storran. "Gillian," he went on, his voice deepening. "Gillian—dear. We're two rather lonely people. We shall be lonelier still when Michael and Magda are married. Couldn't we be lonely—in company?"

Gillian's hand moved a little beneath his, then stayed still.

"Why, Dan—Dan——" she stammered.

"Yes," went on the strong, tender voice. "I'm asking you to marry me. Gillian, I'd never expect too much of you. We both know all that's in the past of each of us. But we might help

each other to be less lonely—good comrades together, Gillian."

And suddenly Gillian realized how good it would be to rest once more in the shelter of a man's affection and good comradeship, to have some one to laugh with or to be sorry with. There's a tender magic in the word "together." And she, too, had something to give in return—sympathy and understanding and a warm friendship. She would not be going to him empty-handed.

"Is it yes, Gillian?"

She bent her head.

"Yes, Dan."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Magda paused outside the closed door of the room. She knew whom she would see within. Lady Arabella had told her he was there waiting for her.

Her first impulse had been to refuse to meet him. Then the temptation to see him again, just once more, before she passed out of his life altogether, rushed over her like the surge of some resistless sea, sweeping everything before it.

Very quietly she opened the door and went into the room.

"Magda!"

She never knew whether he rally uttered her name or whether it was only the voiceless, clamorous cry of his whole consciousness, of a man's passionate demand for the woman who is mate of his soul and body.

But she answered its appeal, her inmost being responding to the claim of it. All recollection of self, of the dimming of her beauty, even of the great gulf of months that lay between them, crowded with mistakes and failure, was burned away in the white-hot flame of love which blazed up within her.

She ran to him, and that white, soaring flame found its expression in the dear, human tenderness of the little cry

which broke from her as he turned his gaunt face toward her.

"Oh, Saint Michael! Saint Michael! How dreadfully ill you look! Oh, my dear—sit down! You're not fit to stand!"

But when that first instinctive cry had left her lips, memory came flooding over her once more. She shrank back from him, covering her face with her hands, agonizingly conscious of the change in herself, of that shadowing of her beauty which the sensitiveness of a woman in love had so piteously magnified.

Then, drawing her hands slowly down, she braced herself to say what must be said.

"You are free of me, Michael." She spoke in a curious, still voice. "I know Marraïne and Gillian between them have brought you back. But you are free of me. As you see, I shall never do any more harm. No other man will come to grief for the sake of the Wielitzska. I determined that as I had made others pay, so I would pay. I think," she went on softly, suddenly moving toward the window and standing full in the brilliant sunlight, "I think you'll agree I've settled the bill."

Michael came to her side.

"I want you for my wife," he said simply.

She held out her work-roughened hands, while the keen-edged sunlight pitilessly revealed the hollowed line of cheek and throat, the lusterless dark hair, the fine lines which Pain, the great sculptor, had graved about her mouth.

"You are an artist before everything, Michael," she said. "Look—look well!"

He took the two work-worn hands in his and drew her nearer to him.

"I'm your lover before everything," he answered. "When will you come to me, Magda?"

"No, no," she said whisperingly. "I mustn't come. You'll never—never quite forgive me. Some day the past

would come between us again. You'll never forget it all."

"No," he replied steadily. "Perhaps not. Consequences *cannot* be evaded. There are things that can't be forgotten. But one forgives. And I love you—love you, Magda, so that I can't face life without you!" His voice vibrated. "The past must always lie like a shadow on our love. But you're my woman—my soul! And if you've sinned, then it must be my sin, too."

She leaned away from him.

"Do you mean—June?" she asked.

He nodded with set lips.

"Then—then you don't know—you haven't heard?"

His expression answered her and her face changed, grew suddenly radiant, transfigured.

"Oh, Saint Michael—Saint Michael! Then there is one thing I can do, one gift I have still left to give! Oh, my dear, I can take away the shadow!"

Her voice breathless and shaken, she told him how June had died—all that Dan Storran had learned from the doctor who had attended her.

"I know I hurt her—hurt her without thinking. But oh, Michael! Thank God, it wasn't through me that she died!"

And Michael, as he folded his arms about her, knew that the shadow which had lain between him and the woman he loved was there no longer. They

were free—freed from those "ropes of steel" which had held them bound. Free to go together and find once more their Garden of Eden!

Presently, when those first perfect moments of reunion were past, Magda gave utterance to the doubts and perplexities which still vexed her soul.

"Pain may purify," she said slowly. "But it spoils, Michael, and blots and ruins. I think, after all, pain is meaningless."

Michael's gray, steady eyes met her troubled ones.

"I don't think pain—just as pain—purifies," he answered quickly. "Pain is merely horrible. It is the *willingness to suffer* that shrives us—not the pain itself."

Later still, the essential woman in her came into its own again.

"I shall never be able to sit for you any more, Saint Michael," she said regretfully. "I'm nobody's model—now!"

She could see only her lost beauty, the unthinking, radiant beauty of mere youth. But Michael could see all that her voluntary renunciation and atonement had bestowed in its stead of more enduring significance.

He took her by the hand and led her to the mirror.

"There," he said, a great content in his voice, "is the model for the greatest picture I shall ever paint—the model for my 'Madonna.'"



Another story by MARGARET PEDLER will appear shortly in SMITH'S.



WHAT THE STARS SAY

by Madame Renée Longuille

HOW TO READ YOUR OWN HOROSCOPE

LESSON, XI.

UPON every map of life, or chart of the heavens at birth, we find the planet Mars exerting his own peculiar influence. Without the stimulus of his forceful, energetic rays we would lack the courage and strength to use the vibrations from other planets. Therefore this little red, fiery star's mission is to give us push and vim in all affairs of life. According to the sign and house in which he is placed, his vibrations will be strong or weak.

The person who has Mars in the sign Aquarius at birth will receive his influence through the intellect. His wit will be very sharp and his mind quick to grasp scientific subjects or those of a profound nature. Much of his work and energy will be directed toward the betterment of humanity, and he will probably be able to sense the greatest needs of a community and supply them. This is the type of person who gives for the good of giving in a quiet, unselfish way, disliking any notoriety or glory that may come from his efforts. He is often the anonymous giver, his reward being the simple satisfaction of relieving distress and suffering. Society seeks this type of person because it recognizes true worth and strength of character. He may be employed in some capacity which will bring him in contact with the public, or he may be

an organizer and direct many people. His ideas on religion will be accepted, for his sincerity cannot be mistaken. There is probability of death in a strange land, or he may be far from home and friends when he dies.

When Mars manifests his power through the sign Pisces, the native has a very sweet, kind, receptive nature. The horoscope as a whole must be taken into consideration when interpreting the manner in which a person will respond to this Mars-in-Pisces position. If a fairly fortunate map of life is evident, and aspects from other planets are favorable and good, the native may turn his energy and efforts along occult lines, and be really successful in the investigation of metaphysical subjects. But should the horoscope show ill luck, or many unfortunate aspects, or be rather weak as a whole, this type of person may expect many crosses to bear and much unhappiness and sorrow, through which he will be taught life's lessons. Death may result from a blind pursuit of pleasure.

The employment will be changed more than once, and many opportunities will be lost through the native's tendency to be a dreamer of dreams. In a female horoscope this position of Mars may be one indication of anxiety or delay in love affairs or marriage,

of which there may be more than one. It is interesting to note that a person with Mars in Pisces may find himself employed where he will be required to wear some sort of uniform.

When we are born on this plane of existence we bring no money or material possessions with us, nor can we hope to take such with us when we leave. But what we do bring here is character, the result and total of the work and opportunities of past lives. This, too, is the only thing we may take away with us when we depart this world. It is said that Jupiter on a chart of life stands for this, the *character*. Thus, when Jupiter is well placed and fortunately aspected at the moment of a person's birth, it will be said of him, more or less throughout his life, that he is "lucky." As some are said to be "born with silver spoons in their mouths," it must be that they have earned this favor somehow, somewhere in the past, for there is no "royal road" to anything.

Jupiter unafflicted, and giving through the sign Aries, endows the nature with a lofty ambition. It is a fortunate position. Journeying to foreign countries may always be fortunate, but there may be also an element of secrecy about such journeys. On these voyages many benefic friendships may be made with people of broad intellect, who will be of great assistance to the Jupiter-in-Aries native in a social way. Money invested abroad, or far from the native's place of birth, will probably bring gain rapidly. Windfalls in the way of legacies from relatives are indicated.

Jupiter in Taurus shows the character to be of a very peaceful, sweet, though firm, type. Relatives do not play a very fortunate part in this native's career, but friends of the family may help to advance his interests greatly. Taurus is the natural sign of money, and the great benefic Jupiter poised here promises much material gain. In

speculation, this type of person may be extremely lucky, always taking into consideration, when thus interpreting the position, the horoscope as a whole. Probably a truly religious and philosophical spirit will be manifest in this character. This position promises happiness in love affairs and gain through marriage. The affections are broad, liberal, and very chaste. Friends are likely to be of a spiritual type.

When Gemini holds the benefic Jupiter, he gives expansion to the qualities of a bright, clear mind which can at times seem to penetrate the future. There may be much interest shown in occult subjects. Friends and relatives will play an important part in the life. Work or employment is not likely to be of a showy or brilliant kind, but a good name will be gained through mental pursuits and culture. There are indications of a great deal of psychic ability latent in this type of character.

Jupiter in Cancer, the sign of motherhood, endows the native who has this position on his chart with a very kind, motherly, protective nature. Cancer is a somewhat mediumistic sign, and Jupiter always has much to do with the religious feelings of a person. Thus, a native with this position operating will lean toward a mystical religion through which he may gain much fame. Marriage will be fortunate and happy. His death may occur in a foreign country and cause a great deal of public interest and sympathy. Jupiter is very powerful in this sign.

Jupiter vibrating through the sign Leo gives rather a masterful disposition, but one well disposed and aiming for great things. The disposition is frank and noble, but nevertheless does not like to be crossed. Opponents of this native are soon convinced, and usually become fast and ardent friends. There will probably be great capacity for enjoyment of a healthy type. Often in these natives there is a strong, in-

tuitive feeling that tells them those who may be trusted and those who are dishonest. This position promises a good degree of domestic happiness.

Jupiter in Virgo indicates a strange character. The parents at the time of birth will probably be struggling against very adverse conditions. The native chooses his friends carefully, according to his own needs, but usually they are people of strange or peculiar reputations, or those who follow uncommon pursuits—such as psychics, bohemians, or perhaps geniuses. The marriage may be in some way very peculiar and there may be a secret love affair with an inferior. This native will render much service to humanity during his life without a thought of reward. The mind may be very critical but ever liberal and possessed of a practical philosophy. Employment or work may take this native to foreign countries, where he will gain credit and esteem.

The sign Libra containing Jupiter bestows on the character a love of true justice and harmony, indicating one who tries to help others in times of sorrow and need. He is a person to whom those afflicted will always apply for aid. This is a good position for marriage and promises happiness and harmony with good and dutiful children. Friends will probably prove to be very liberal and helpful throughout life, especially those friendships made on journeys or far from home. This native will also enjoy success in partnership. At some time in life he may be greatly surprised by receiving an unexpected legacy. The end of life will probably occur among his relatives and in surroundings that are happy and prosperous.

Jupiter in Scorpio augurs a firm, powerful, proud nature. Much jealousy will be directed toward this type of person. He will probably be obliged to keep many secrets involving the honor and reputation of others, or perhaps of a nation or government. There

will probably be a love of the medical profession or, as a hobby, he may be particularly interested in chemistry. Scorpio is the natural sign of death, and in some way this Jupiter-in-Scorpio native will gain through deaths or matters connected with death. During his life he may suffer from rheumatism or some inherited disease, which will eventually affect his heart. This position foretells many strange events and peculiar occurrences which invariably have a tragic note.

The sign Sagittarius is ruled by Jupiter. Thus, when he is poised in this sign on a natal chart the position is supposed to be a very strong and congenial one for this great benefic. The native will be religious and sincere, with a leaning toward philosophical ideas. There may be a great desire to speculate, and if Jupiter is receiving good aspects from other planets, the native will be fortunate and lucky. But, on the other hand, if Jupiter is afflicted, the native may turn out to be a most unfortunate gambler. He may benefit through marriage, and there is a likelihood of more than one attachment.

Jupiter in Capricorn shows a somewhat strait-laced but ambitious character. The native at some time in life may be very much disturbed by, and interested in helping, one of his unfortunate friends. Although this type of person may be sincere and steadfast in his religious beliefs, they are never along hopeful or imaginative lines. The old, hard laws of the Puritans will appeal more to his religious nature. As for mystic, or occult, thoughts, he will dismiss these with an impatient wave of the hand. The word duty weighs heavily on this native's mind, and only by conforming strictly to its laws can he be happy. All work and pleasure must be approved by Madam Grundy. She is his dictator. He is a conscientious student, remembering facts and historic dates easily.

Aquarius brings out many different qualities of Jupiter. The native will possess a broad and thoughtful mind, and will be keen and lively. He may gain many friends through his ability to please. Work will be most successful when connected with institutions or the public and perhaps along some hygienic line. This is a somewhat favorable position for marriage, which will be for love only. Death will probably be unexpected.

Jupiter working through the celestial sign Pisces endows the native with many attractive qualities. Friends will surround him and he will always be able to think of many little ways of administering to their needs and pleasures. Dumb animals find a happy home with this Jupiter-in-Pisces type of person, who ought to be connected with the S. P. C. A., or any other society of like nature. He will do great and good work in the world when employed in hospitals or asylums, or among the poor and unfortunate, where true sympathy and interest are needed. He may develop great mediumistic powers late in life. Death will probably be quiet and without fear or distress.

The next planet to study is the so-called "evil" Saturn. The influence coming from this planet is always binding, delaying, and restricting. The good vibrations are those that work for chastity, industry, and prudence. When this influence is misdirected, meanness and extreme selfishness are manifested. Saturn is often called the "Planet of Fate." He balances up your checks when you pass them in on this plane, passing over to you the result when you return to this sphere to start a fresh page in the book of your many lives. Thus, when Saturn is found in Aries, it points out sorrows and obstacles, especially in the first part of life. The native may marry an old, crabbed, or very jealous person. Money may be lost after marriage. He will be very

ambitious and will wish to be at the head of things, but success will always be slow and will come mostly through prudence and economy. As years advance this type of person may be very much concerned about money matters, whether he need be or not, and he will probably hesitate to take any one into his confidence. Unless Saturn receives good rays and help from other planets, there is likely to be trouble with the head or face.

Saturn in Taurus makes one prudent in money matters. There will be sorrow and distress caused by relatives, but a few friends will prove most faithful and give great help throughout life. Marriage brings sorrows, either financially or through death, and many strange experiences. Metaphysical studies will prove most interesting to this native. If Saturn is afflicted in this sign the throat will cause much trouble. Travel may also cause the native discomfort and he may be forced to journey from his home much against his will. There is danger of falseness and secret opponents working against him.

When Saturn is found in the sign Gemini, dual experiences throughout life may be expected. Saturn works many unpleasant things through this sign. Deception or treachery will be difficult to avoid. Troubles never seem to come singly, especially when Saturn is afflicted by some other planet. Relatives are a burden and do much harm to the native, although they may seem to be very fair and honest to his face. Marriage may occur far from his place of birth, or he may marry some one from a foreign country. It would be advisable for this native to keep away from the law and lawyers, although in all probability he will be mixed up somehow with solicitors—greatly to his sorrow. His death is disturbing and is hastened by the actions of those around him.

System and the Jungle

By W. Douglas Newton

Author of "War," "Green Ladies," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY VICTOR FERARD

The story of a man, with a hard, clear, efficient mind, who set himself a goal that included fame, power, position, and marriage with the daughter of a duke. What happened to all his careful planning when he found himself in a Brazilian jungle is told in this absorbing story.

WHEN Hector Lorrimer looked upon his first bush village, saw it standing picturesque and culpably untidy in the cruel, searching glare of the golden Brazilian sun, he spat over the side of the big-masted canoe in sheer disgust.

His cold and steady eyes widened as they took in the strewn-about vista of habitation and inhabitants: the ramshackle houses innocent of walls, the draggled palm thatching, the listless women working casually at the mandioca trough, the men determinedly occupied in an unorganized indolence slightly mitigated by the chewing of assai, the Amazon betel nut—the whole untidy mess of life and litter which made up the scene. As he looked he snarled:

"My hat! And *this* is the twentieth century!"

I give this trivial incident because it seems to me a crucial one. It is the sort of commonplace detail which makes the whole business connected with Lorrimer so mystifying. The true Lorrimer spoke there. Those who knew Lorrimer would expect no other comment from that hard, clear, efficient mind. And yet, was it the true Lorrimer?

Lorrimer, as we knew him, was decidedly twentieth century. That drag-

gled inefficiency in the Amazon village was a thing which would hurt his practical mind. He had no use at all for purposeless living. It was not merely that he believed in order, careful planning, and definite goal; he was, if you were to believe him—and that was quite easy—in himself the supreme and dazzling example of an efficiently planned life.

I have heard people speak with that jealousy which is actually a tribute of Lorrimer's "card-index career." Even persons less prejudiced agreed that in him the "get on or get out" principle had been carried to uncompromising perfection. Lorrimer was the apotheosis of the self-made man. He had set himself a goal, he had reached that goal by cold calculation, ruthless determination, and an entire callousness to anything outside the practical politics of getting on.

Lorrimer sprang from a class where men do other men's work at a low wage and in the suburban dignity of black coats. He must have been born with a cold and calculating intelligence. He despised the affectations of his class from his boyhood. Even in his boyhood he was mapping out a career which would take him to the highest social status in the land in the shortest possible space of time.

In his last years at school he sur-

prised his father, who drew up extremely careful balance sheets for a produce firm, but had never attempted to draw up one of his own life, by placing before him a most amazing table of the things he meant to learn before going into business.

"Bookkeeping, shorthand, analysis of business figures, company law, commercial practice and theory, chemistry," gasped the amazed father, staring at that list. "What the deuce do you mean by all this, Hector?"

"Those are the things I've got to learn to get on," said the boy.

"But—do they teach those things at grammar school?" said the father, faced with definite facts of existence, and incapable of grappling with them.

"They don't," answered Hector, his thin lips contemptuous. "They teach the history of England, Stuart period; the first five books of Euclid; English literature, mainly Shakespeare and Milton with a touch of Addison; geography of a sort, and so on. Nothing of any use to me."

"My dear boy, it's what everybody learns."

"That's why it's not good enough. Look at everybody doing petty little jobs on nothing a year and getting nowhere."

"It's the education of—er—of a gentleman," said his father, who, having been rendered helpless by his remorseless son, retired upon his dignity.

"I'm not a gentleman," snapped Hector callously; "anyhow, not yet. I am going to be a business man. I am going to get on. These are the things I need."

"But if the grammar school doesn't teach them?"

Promptly Hector Lorrimer produced another list; not even in his early days did he leave anything unplanned or with tangled ends. It was a list of schools. The schools were straggled out over the metropolis. Some were night classes, some were university-extension schools,

one or two were private business schools. They were, as Hector pointed out, testimony to the haphazard manner in which practical education was managed and grouped, but he had set his clear brain to work upon the mass, and, by taking a class on this morning, another on that evening, he had schemed out a weekly time-table which would enable him to study all the subjects he meant to master. Even the financial side had been studied. Since many of the schools—the evening classes, for example—were free, or almost free of charge, and most of the others had been selected because they were State aided or cheap, Hector was able to show that he would be able to get the education he wanted for rather less than the fees his father was paying to the grammar school. To his father's horrified protest that some of the schools were common schools for workingmen's children, he answered impatiently:

"Oh, what does it matter? They teach what I want. That's the thing that counts."

His father, with a last feeble resistance, cried:

"But what do you want? Commercial practice and—and chemistry! What are you aiming at—a post with a drug-making firm?"

"A post!" said Hector with great scorn. "Do you think I'm going to help some one else make the money I want to make myself? You bet I won't! I'm going to run a patent medicine."

His father stared at him with the anguish of outraged dignity.

"Easy money, you see," said Hector coolly. "I've been studying it all. Do you know you could make Kennington's pills yourself at about the eleventh of a farthing a box when you pay a shilling a box for them? Look at the profit for the minimum amount of work and outlay. Well, I'm going to find something like that. I'll find it, all right, after a course of pharmaceutical



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chemistry. It'll be something simple. I will begin by manufacturing it myself in the kitchen here. I'll give it a name that hits between the eyes. Boxes and bottles, printing and show cards, and the ingredients—it will be noted that the ingredients, the thing itself, was the factor he mentioned last—"those things will mean money. I'll get the money. I'll sell the things myself, do the office work myself. Everything at the minimum cost, with low overhead expenses, you understand? No advertising at first, but when the cash comes in ad-

vertise to the extent of two-thirds of profits."

The old man gazed at his incalculable son. He could only manage to say:

"So that is your ambition? You mean to be a purveyor of quack medicines."

"Not for anything," said Hector. "Quack medicine is the quickest way to get capital. I won't be able to do anything without capital, so I am out to get it with the least effort and the

least loss of time. When I get capital I'll begin in earnest."

His father had nothing to say. His son went completely beyond his imaginative scope, and, in any case, his was not the spirit which could keep alive an enduring opposition to a determination so ruthless. He gave in. He handed over the grammar-school fees to Hector, and Hector obtained his practical education. At somewhere between fifteen and sixteen Lorrimer can be said to have launched himself on his cold and solidly planned career.

He floated his patent medicine. It was called "Stimulos." That's as near to the world-familiar name as we need go. He got the name as he got his first money—from me.

I have no sentiments about the matter. In the beginning Lorrimer's attitude toward me was as calculated and as ruthless as his attitude toward getting on. I was five years his senior, and I was not merely the richest of the boys at the grammar school, but, being an orphan, could control that money at the age of twenty-one. Lorrimer, with his efficient and clear-sighted instinct for the main chance, had singled me out in the earliest days as the one among his schoolfellows who could help him most. He had made me his chum, not from affection but on business principles.

He made friends as brilliantly as he planned his life. He made me love him. In the beginning, anyhow, I think he merely had a calm contempt for me. My easy-going and indolent leanings toward literature and romance must have struck him as messy and wasteful of tissue. But he concealed his contempt, because to show it would not have been business, and won my affection completely. When he came to me and adroitly worked on my sense of romance in connection with that quack tonic, he already had me half conquered.

I lent him with gladness the two hundred pounds he wanted to float the thing.

His terms were generous; I stood in with him for half share. Not that I cared, but it shows his nature. He was fair because it was good business. Your unfair man is constantly being tripped up by his own meanness. Also, since one never knows when one will need a financier again, it is unwise to give him any sort of grievance. This is not my philosophy. It is Lorrimer's. He gave it to me brutally and frankly. There was no sentiment about the matter. He abhorred sentiment. It was sloppy and made men inefficient.

Well, I needn't go into "Stimulos," except to say that Lorrimer got me to select a name, not merely because I was literary, but because he never did a job which some one else could do for him. I gave him a list; he selected one name from it. And the name and the tonic it labeled went. It made money, I fancy, from the first week. Lorrimer took a couple of rooms in the neighborhood of the great drug-making firms. One room was an office; the other, fitted with a laboratory sink, his manufactory. He was the sole occupant, manager, and maker, of those rooms for nearly three months. By that time his tonic—not a bad stimulant, either—in its distinctive bottles, and his attractive show cards were figuring in many drug stores. He then had to employ a packer and a typist to deal with his growing trade.

In six months he was advertising in the cheaper weeklies, and had given up the time-wasting occupation of selling "Stimulos" himself, and was employing regular travelers. In a year his advertisements appeared in every paper of importance, and his offices had grown to many rooms, while he had rented a small factory. In two years "Stimulos" posters appeared on many billboards, and in three years its name

was so familiar everywhere that it had become a sort of catch phrase. I am receiving amazing dividends from it to this day.

By the time "Stimulos" was a household word, Lorrimer was already putting it behind him, allowing it to progress by its own momentum, with only occasional sharp and searching descents on the administration. He was out for bigger things, plunging into the beginnings of those huge manipulations of finance and factories that were, in an astonishingly short time, to make him world famous.

He utilized every penny of his own profit from the tonic in his coldly devised and pitilessly efficient schemes. He would take nothing from outsiders. I remember offering to find some of the money for one of his big and almost dangerously speculative ventures.

"I don't want your money, Darwood. I don't want anybody's money," he said dryly. "It's my money that's going to make money for me." He did not believe in parting with more dividends than he could help. I recall he didn't even thank me for my offer. He wouldn't thank for what he had not asked, that was superfluous, waste.

He pulled off that deal as he pulled off every other. He was so efficient he could not fail. He was like some soulless yet exquisite piece of machinery which was bound to accomplish its end by the precision, concentration, and conservatism of its effort. And so he implacably grew, and I watched him. The frigid and inhuman determination of his power was a thing which fascinated me. He became bigger and stronger, so that when he was in the late twenties he was already enormously rich, he had a commercial status of immense importance, and his influence in the money world was of profound significance. He was, even at that age, one of the coming "big men" of the world.

And I alone of all who knew him understood the driving force which actuated the immense and sure sweep of his rise. We had not grown apart. His ruthless and clear-cut personality had always intrigued my curiosity and sense of romance, and I kept friendly. On his side he had outgrown his positive attitude of contempt for a life which seemed indolent and purposeless, and though he still looked at me from a height of superiority, my very difference attracted him. Also his method had cut him off from friendships, and in his vast circle of acquaintances I was the only soul with whom he was intimate. That, I am certain, was a relief to him. He could blow off steam with me, he could relieve his mind of those bursts of vanity which natures such as his are forced to express on occasion.

On occasion, also, I was useful to him. From my different angle I could give him ideas which his own mental state prevented his seeing, but which he was quick to utilize.

One day, for example, I walked into that glittering block of offices which, in an emphatic manner, advertised his importance to the world, and I found him with an architect. He was just then building a huge factory for one of his many ventures. With his sure grasp of things he had planned the undertaking on a vast scale. He had bought up a great tract of land, and he was going to build a village about the factory. He was going to have his work people on the spot, he was binding them doubly to him by the interests of their work and home. He was also going to be their landlord and take their rent. He was studying the plans of the dwellings as I came in, and, as a privileged person, I looked over his shoulder at the row of grim and rigid houses shown in the elevation drawing.

"My dear Lorrimer, need you make those houses so hideous?"



He learned with delight to handle the blowpipe.

"They're not hideous," he said. "They give the greatest possible accommodation for the outlay."

"The maximum result for the minimum cost," I laughed, taunting him with his own gospel. "But you look merely at the material side, my dear fellow. Why not be in the swim and design your dwellings on this new Garden City

plan? You'll be in the advance guard of fashion, and you'll help to make your employees' lives enduring."

Lorrimer sat still for less than forty-five seconds. Then he tossed the plans across to the architect.

"Scrap all that," he snapped. "Design me a Garden City on the latest, the very latest, lines. If you can get ahead of the very latest lines—good."

"But, Mr. Lorrimer," gasped the astounded architect, "do you realize that this will cost you quite ten thousand pounds more?"

"You heard what I said," snapped Lorrimer. "Go and do it."

Of course Lorrimer got more than ten thousand pounds out of it. In less than a week the newspapers were full of him and his new factory. He was hailed as a pioneer employer. He was called enlightened, a benefactor of mankind, the best type of merchant prince, and so on. His garden village made an immense splash, it increased his

prestige, his income, and to it may be traced his knighthood.

He was beginning to loom large in the public mind, and that was part of Lorrimer's life plan. Under all his actions was a definite ambition as coldly and as precisely defined as any of his other highly efficient impulses. One night, after he had pulled off a tre-

mendous coup while yet in the early thirties, he gave me an insight into his keen material dreams. He had talked more freely in his elation, had spoken of his success in glowing terms.

"That'll be bringing you near your million, Lorrimer," I said.

"It takes me past my *third*," he answered, allowing himself to chuckle at my amazement. "Three million and a knighthood before thirty-five! That puts me six years in front of my schedule, Darwood."

"A schedule! But of course you wouldn't be you if you hadn't laid down a precise time-table for your life. It must be an astonishing document. Where are you going to end, Lorrimer?"

"Right on top," he said with a certain cold glee.

"In politics?"

"Only through the medium of the House of Lords," he answered.

"The power behind the powers," I cried, understanding him, and hugely interested. "And what else—love?"

"Cut it out! Love, vicious sentimentality, as *you* look at it. I've no use for sentimentality. I'll marry, of course; that gives position, solidity. She'll be the daughter of a duke; that'll give me an immense leverage." Lorrimer's elation was carrying him away.

"You cold-blooded frog," I laughed.

"What's life to you—a mathematical proposition?"

"Life—my life—isn't going to be messy," said Lorrimer, letting himself go for the relief it gave him. "Most people live utterly inefficient lives, lives which never attempt to get anywhere, and never get anything. Even as a boy I grasped that. It made me sick. I made up my mind that my life would not sprawl. I made up my mind that I was not going to exist stagnantly in a backwater. There was going to be no waste about me. I defined exactly my ambitions at fifteen and a half, drew

up my plan, and went straight ahead toward what I meant to get."

"And what, precisely, do you mean to get?"

"I mean to be right on top," said Lorrimer with assurance. "I mean to be numbered among the big ones of this world and to be as big as the biggest of them. I mean to be that before I'm forty-five. I mean to have a position which even those people who are in what you call society will look up to. I mean to have a house to which all the people who bulk large in the world will be anxious to come. I mean to have power so that my words and actions have world meaning. I've got to be there, on top, with all the biggest thronging round me, and the mass looking on with awe. I've built up my life scientifically for this. I've been hard on myself, lonely, but only so that in the end I may have the crowd about me, at my beck and call, thinking a deuce of a lot about me. My marriage will help me there."

"Amazing, Lorrimer! You even think you can fall in love according to plan and specification," I cried.

"Love! I said nothing about love. I have no possible use for what you call love. It's sentimental, it's a hindrance. It begins in madness and ends in mind-deadening, faculty-stultifying boredom. I've weighed it up. Marriage is something to be planned practically and usefully. The woman I marry, whoever she may be, will be a partner in the true sense. She will be one who can fill my house with the right people, attract the attention of the big ones toward me, and in scores of ways help me to a position of power. The way to look at marriage is as a business proposition. That's how I look at it. I shall be ready for marriage in about five years."

His calculation was something which devastated the human mind, but its cold precision was unerring. During those

five years I watched him climb. In those years his career was one of steady conquest. He became a tremendous figure in commerce, almost a legendary figure in the realm where men do business. His inhuman sacrifice of himself to his definite end had made him almost a colossal figure. Although he was still under forty, there was obviously nothing more for him to conquer in the arena of finance and commerce. The world, the great shining world of society, of the ruling class; the world of titles, government, and power was ripe for his assault.

And then quite startlingly he came to me one day with the news that he was going to Brazil.

"Hullo," I cried, "isn't this running away from the schedule?"

He smiled his cold smile at me; he half regretted his confidence, but, having made it to me, he stood by it.

"This is on schedule," he said. "In six months' time there is going to be the biggest rubber boom on record. I am going to the land where the rubber will come from."

"I don't quite follow your line of reasoning."

"Self-made millionaires are cheap," he said sardonically. "Every West End salon is thick with them. To rise above the commonplace one must strike an individual note. Brazil will be blazing like a new comet in the public eye in six months' time. In six months' time I shall return from a thorough exploration of Brazil."

I saw it. He, too, would blaze in the public eye like a new comet. He would be the man who knew, the man who had come straight from that strange and wondrous land, surrounded by its glamour, packed with information. That trip to Brazil was part of the cold efficiency which missed nothing. Brazil was the stroke which would enable him to gain the whole world.

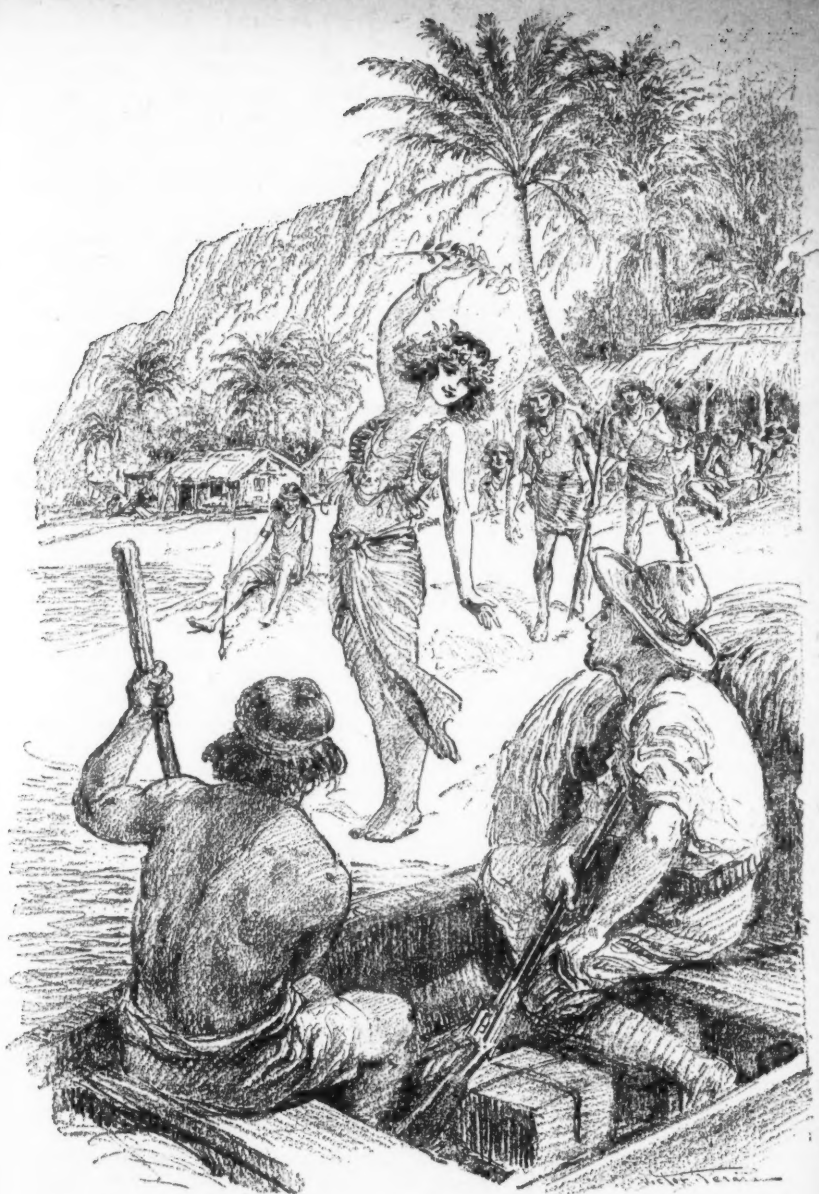
What followed I can give only sketchily, piecing things together from a score of casual sources.

Hector Lorrimer, with his task practically done, with his unsentimental ambition well within his cool and efficient grasp, went to Brazil. And directly he touched Brazil he hated it.

Para was sheer disgust to him, with its bumpy streets and the stink of the rubber core, and other things which littered the sidewalk and the blowzy stores. The sandy suburban streets, with their ramshackle huts and degenerating establishments of the more well to do, which seemed to be visibly crumbling to pieces under the greedy assault of the jungle, seemed to him to be a crime crying for vengeance. And he was no more pleased with his journey upstream in an old tramp steamer, which sweated rust and seemed to exist on itself by reason of its inner insect life. But the journey was on the schedule; he was here to learn the things which would make him blaze in society. He meant to learn them, so somewhere above Santarem he took to canoe, and pushed down through the waters of the Tapajos. It was somewhere about here that he had his first close-up view of an Amazon village—and spat.

Somewhere in the region of the Tapajos cataracts he struck into the bush surlily, but, since he meant to go back as a famous explorer, he carried the thing through. Perhaps, too, he was glad to get away from the fire ants, that plague of the sandy river shore whose sting is the pain of a red-hot needle.

It must have been a strange, almost cataclysmic change. I can see him slipping along those quiet, those noiseless and mystic waterways, staring from under the palm thatch of his canoe at the flaunting planlessness of nature. I can see the shock in his eyes as he looked at the mighty uprising of the jungle;



She took a jasmine flower from her hair and flung it toward him.

trees, and the mesh of *sipos* weaving the trees together, shooting straight toward the sun from out the very water of the swampy river. The wantonness of nature, its chaos, its contempt of schedule, its mighty lack of plan, the sheer futility of its tremendous beauty must have overwhelmed him. And for miles by the score he slipped noiselessly, like a stone on glass, on this silent highway between the enormous calm of the forest.

He went deeper and deeper into this mighty thing, where time was not, where ambitions were but specks in the sunlight, where *amanha*—to-morrow—was as good as to-day. Across the stream in a band of gold the sun lay along the tops of the trees, and on the trees, flowers, heliotrope, carmine, yellow, blue shone like jewels. Below this broad-brushed band of sun lay the soft and scented gloom of the jungle, as thrilling and austere as the soft gloom of a great temple. In the dusk strange orchids glowed palely, and the upsweeping pillars of the trees had the majesty of chiseled columns. Skimming through the air were birds, brilliant and flashing. They had an exotic radiance as though wrought of phantasy to decorate a strange Arabian night.

And when the softer night darkness came, with its secret noises and its heady, sweet odors, Lorrimer would still sit under the thatch of his canoe. The boatmen fed the fire on the dirt hearth in the forepart, and would cook the things they had shot or caught, and fry the *farinha*. The glow of the fire shone on the great stems near which they were moored. They would hear the secret movement of the bush, hear its cries. Into the solemn quiet of the water an arapaima would splash. And the boatmen would sing songs of extraordinarily doubtful taste, but full of the strange, wistful sadness of the Latin, from which some of their blood came.

Lorrimer must have felt his efficiency, his schedule, rather curious things to consider in those splendid and spacious moments, when the world seemed so huge and humans and their endeavors so small. And he sat, lolling and smoking and looking and doing nothing. He fished or he hunted. He rolled himself up on his mat and slept.

At a tiny Mundurucu settlement they landed, and stayed three days. By their time-table they should have left in the cool of the morning on the day after landing. It was Lorrimer himself who decided to stay. There was nothing to do in that neat settlement save to loll and smoke in the hammocks of bromelia fiber and listen to the talk. Lorrimer showed his quickness in the way he picked up the native words; he could understand and be understood very soon. He strolled into the forest, too, went with the slim Indians, learned with delight to handle the blowpipe. He came back to the settlement astonishingly proud of the fact that he, too, could slay with the stealthy dart at a full sixty yards; he was the equal of any Indian. It was again the application of his efficient mind. When his guide told him that they had better be pushing on he answered, "Oh, I suppose so," but not with very much decision.

They took the smaller canoes and crept up through the deep channels of swamps. Silently they slipped through silence. About them the inscrutable jungle rose out of the very water, and the vines came down so low that at times they had to creep through a dusky tunnel, their heads bent in the green gloom. In these places where land and man seems not, the mere utterance of a word came back to them hollow and drumlike from the great void of the wilds.

At night, with their hammocks slung from tree stems, they sat or lay round the hunter's fire, smoking, talking, de-

liciously tired out. So to the gleam of the fire on the tall trees, and on the thick canopies of vines they went to sleep, to wake to eat the food of their own hunting and to move on once more through the eternal serenity of the jungle.

Quite suddenly they came upon a little lake. They shot out from the dark, thick dusk of the bush into a scene so radiant and precise in its beauty that it might have come from the theater. Before their eyes the tiny lake expanded in a sweep of breathless loveliness. On one side was the superb wall of green shining with jewellike blooms of the jungle. Right ahead, shimmering in the golden sunlight, the jungle swept about the far lower end of the water. To the right there was a band of sandy beach, shining and perfect like a fillet of silver, behind the beach a wide campos—flat hunting ground—behind the campos abrupt and splendid cliffs standing high over groves of wild guava and myrtle. A ravishing scene, pellucid, shining with the sun, full of blue and green and gold and silver, like a gem in a perfect setting glittered the lake, its waters of poignant and exquisite blue.

Lorrimer flashed from the steamy gloom of the bush into the delicious realization of this beauty. It struck deep into him like the note of a perfect song. He gasped. With an edge to his voice he stopped the canoe and sat and looked and looked.

As he looked, silent, rapt, his guide told him that this place was known as "*Mai d'agua*"—"The Source." Lorrimer's only answer was, "Of course." He looked without speaking at the scene. He gave no command, and presently the Indians and *mamelucos*, rather bored with the view, took the law into their own hands and paddled toward the settlement.

It was a tiny place, a mere collection of roofs and adobe huts near the

silver sand and under the shade of mangoes. It was neat and pleasant, after the manner of the homes of the *Mundurucu* Indians, and it was pretty. About it there blazed clumps of rose and jasmine trees in full bloom. There was an air of delight about it. The expedition was to get water there, and push on to a camping ground at the end of the lake. When his *montana* touched the beach, the slim Indians came down to watch with their dignified curiosity, and a girl stepped forward laughing, a girl slim and pliant as an *assai* palm, a girl with a delicate and proud face which told of a lingering touch of European blood. A girl as vivid and as immature as a child, with eyes bright as a bird's, and laughing, and with night in her hair.

The girl stepped forward, her tawny body delicate and splendid above the bright cloth of blue and yellow kilted about her waist, and she looked and laughed at Lorrimer. And Lorrimer looked at her. And as they looked she laughed again, with the naturalness of a child. She took a jasmine flower from her hair and flung it toward him, and then turned and ran toward the village. Lorrimer caught the flower.

An hour later, when the guide came to Lorrimer sitting in the hammock of the chief's hut to tell him they must start if they were to reach the end of the lake at night, the white man answered:

"We stay. This is a good place."

They stayed. In a day, in two days, in a week, the guide went sedulously to Lorrimer, asking each time when they were to go on with their travel. Lorrimer astonished the fellow on the first occasion by expressing himself by the single word, which, less than a month back, he had forbidden the guide to use since it represented the accursed spirit of the country. The word was *amanha*—to-morrow. And he walked away to the jasmine trees, and pres-

ently the guide heard his laughter, and another laughing voice, a young voice. And he saw jasmine blossoms tossed through the air and the flash of a slim brown body moving like a dancing fairy between the trunks.

Lorrimer did not move on. He stayed, leading the life of the settlement, hunting with them, sitting and talking with them, wading out into the lake with spear and green-palm torch after *pescado*. He slept in the heat, and lolled about in the cool. He showed no inclination to stir from the place. In the end even the guide's love of lotus eating was satiated. He suggested that it was time to return.

Lorrimer wanted to know the reason for hurry. This was a good place. Why leave it? The guide said that he wished to see his own wife and children, and Lorrimer astonished him by asking who was preventing him.

It took the guide a week to turn these matters over in his head. He consulted Lorrimer many times concerning the stores and the fittings of the canoes for the return voyage, and Lorrimer answered him lazily and showed no inclination to go with him. So the guide and the half-breeds left without him.

The last the guide saw of Lorrimer was the strange spectacle of this strange white man walking into the jungle clad, native fashion, only in light cotton drawers and a broad-brimmed straw hat. His strong body was already brown under the sun. Across his shoulder he carried his long blowpipe. By his side there moved the bright slim figure of a girl, with jasmine flowers shining in the night of her hair, and both were laughing.

And that is the last news civilization has had as yet of Lorrimer. I brought it to civilization. After nine months' silence, when not a word nor a letter had come to Europe from him, I went out to the Amazon. His many interests were going on smoothly, for he had

left them in a condition to run themselves. His fortune was piling up hugely and automatically, but his directors and managers were becoming anxious at his complete indifference to them all, so they approached me.

I went out to the Amazon. I had no difficulty in picking up Lorrimer's trail. A man of his methods and force makes a significant impression in the limited life of such places. I came up with the guide, and he told me the mad story. He even offered to take me up to the wondrous lake, where I could talk to the strange man.

But I did not go. I came home.

It seemed to me that there was nothing else to do. Here was something beyond human calculation, something in which mere man should not meddle, so I left Lorrimer alone.

And he is there now, as far as I can say. He is in that place of beauty and *amanha*, he is in the place where nothing is done and nothing is planned and life strolls on with casual gait and laughter, and where all that counts is not power and position, but the trilling voice of a slim girl, who moves along the jungle verge with jasmine blossom shining in the night of her hair. He is there where the forest, in a cup of flower-jeweled green, holds in its hollow the perfect beauty of that blue shining lake, and perhaps he is right to be there.

Who am I to say? Who am I to try to find an explanation? But I can sometimes hear again the cold confidence of his voice telling me of the position, the fame, the power, and the highly practical marriage with the daughter of a duke which were to be the crown and result of a life planned and carried through with all the ruthlessness of modern efficiency.

And as I hear his voice scorning with cold scorn all the weaknesses to which he has now succumbed I am full of wonder.

On Being Adventurous

WE were walking up Fifth Avenue with a discontented man. A statesman might have accused him of bolshevism, a psychoanalyst might have indicated that he was suffering from some complex or suppressed desire. We, being untutored in such things, describe him as a man with a grouch.

It was a crisp and delightful day. Every one was rich and prosperous. Mysterious and glittering limousines sped silently past, or stopped to allow beautiful and equally mysterious ladies to step out and enter stores whose plate-glass windows were filled with every conceivable article of art and luxury. All the fullness and beauty of civilized life moved and glittered about us.

"Isn't this fine!" we said. "Look at that pretty girl! And see the fur coat on that woman and the stockings on that other one! This is a wonderful town!"

The discontented man turned on us a pair of eyes from which looked out hate and envy and Heaven knows what hungry and disturbing passions.

"You make me tired," he said. "Why have I not any of these fine things? I have to walk. It is enough to make me an anarchist."

"But isn't it exhilarating to think that there are so many nice shiny things in the world even if we don't own them? Who knows what may happen? A millionaire may come out of one of those stores and take us into business. Or that Rolls-Royce might stop and a lady with beautiful hair and complexion ask us to help her in some quaintly perfumed adventure."

"You fool!" said he.

We were still arguing when we got to the Yale Club.

Why is it that when the stork brings a new baby and it is placed on exhibition, people crowd around it with loud manifestations of acute delight? We say it is like its mother or its father—that it is beautiful. As a matter of fact, if we look at it only with the eyes of the flesh and not of the spirit, it is not beautiful, nor does it resemble any one save some hundred thousand other newborn babies. And yet it is beautiful because it is the symbol of the new, unspoiled adventure we call life—still an unsolved mystery in all its loveliness. Is it any wonder that the first little toothless smile has that tear-compelling beauty that shone in the first rainbow, the sign that somehow, somewhere, the promise will be fulfilled?

So, when the day has not been as auspicious as we hoped, let us turn to stories which are partly the essence, partly the glorified reflection of life. We like mystery stories for life is itself a mysterious adventure. There is a story coming in which a young man in search of his mysteriously missing fiancée is assisted by an amiable, eccentric, but adroit gentleman who makes his escape from a sanitarium—a rollicking, witty story, "Mr. Essington at Large," by J. Storer Clouston, starting in the next issue of SMITH'S. Or, if you care for a tense and moving drama of mystery and suspense, try "The Dummy," by John Lawrence Ward, a novelette which appears complete in the same number. Also, there are stories by Arthur Tuckerman, Katherine Haviland Taylor, Margaret Pedler, Dorothea Brande, and others who know how to make life as charming and interesting as it seems in our happiest moments.



The Hair

By Doctor Lillian Whitney

Dr. Whitney is always glad to answer all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health, but she cannot undertake to answer letters which fail to inclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for reply, or to letters inclosing Canadian stamps. Every week she receives many letters of this sort, in spite of the notice always printed at the end of this department. Sometimes, even, the post office sends notification that letters are being held for her, which careless writers have posted with no stamp. If you have failed to receive a reply to your letter, you may know that it is for one of these three reasons.—EDITORS.

AT one time man regarded his hair with reverence. The eccentric James McNeill Whistler even sought to emulate the ancient Greeks by preserving an unshorn lock of hair upon his forehead, but his enthusiasm led him also to adorn it with an individual little ribbon of baby blue. The Greeks dedicated their unshorn locks to their gods, while Whistler probably placed his at the altar of beauty.

Other ancient peoples practiced peculiar rites associated with the hair. The Hebrews, especially, looked upon the beard with reverence, and resented an unseemly touch as an affront, but raising the hands to the beard was considered a supplication for hospitality. A beardless face and a bald head were abhorrent to the men of older races, and we find various solemn oaths connected with this condition; thus an ancient Arabian affirmation usually ended with, "If I have done it, then let the Lord turn my locks into a bald head."

While we do not regard baldness with shame to-day, many men would prefer the fashionable wigs of a bygone age to their billiard-bald pates, which are, besides being very unattractive, a continual reminder of drafts and consequent neuralgic troubles. However much we may smile at the customs of past eras, they frequently had their origin in good sound common sense, and in this case it was realized that the hair was a wonderful protection.

Although the wig originally was designed to conceal the baldness of a king, one may be very certain that in addition to his inordinate vanity the king was susceptible to drafts.

Now the abolition of the beard was also connected in its origin with the scanty hirsute adornment of a king whose sparse growth necessitated shaving. His adaptable courtiers followed the lead, and the beard disappeared in Spain in consequence of Philip the Fifth's inability to wear one. But it was retained in France. The reigning

monarch had suffered a scar of the chin, and if he could hide it under a beard, why not? A nicely groomed beard is certainly more masculine and more pleasing to look upon than a scarred chin.

It is a scientific axiom that a tissue degenerates under misuse or suppression, and so we of to-day are consigning future generations to hairlessness. We are laying the foundation for a hairless race. All these things which are conducive to the destruction of the hair follicles we are encouraging, not consciously—oh, no!—but because it is written in the natural course of human events.

Yet, so useful and so ornamental is the hair that we should cling to it with greater tenacity than we do. Care and forethought will prevent baldness and thus save one from endless neuralgic suffering. If growing a beard, despite our present-day fashions, will cure an intractably chronic laryngitis, or eliminate chronic bronchial conditions so common in elderly men, then why should they not wear a beard in defiance of the times?

The prevailing supposition is that continual shaving strengthens hair growth. What it does to the male beard is precisely what continual clipping, pruning, and dwarfing does to Japanese trees. They are an interesting development, but they are no longer a fine, full-grown, lusty specimen of the original plant, and if the process were pursued still further would end in complete degeneration of the species.

Acquired baldness springs from present-day pursuits and methods of living. Every one knows that the hair is closely related to the nervous system. We are doubtless the most-nervous people the world has ever known. With us the nervous system is continually at high tension, our nerves are coming more and more to the fore; other tissues are receding or being abolished. We sleep

with one eye open and live active sub-conscious lives during sleep which are almost as exhausting as less or lack of sufficient sleep. We demand endless excitement. So attuned have we become thereto that our nerves crave constant change. The strength and substance which should naturally go to a fine suite of hair is eaten up in other ways; the hair is gradually starved out.

City dwellers have more trouble in preserving the hair than persons in rural districts, despite the fact that many of the country dwellers do not consume nearly so much nourishing food as the city bred. Rarely does one see a bald farmer. The explanation lies in their mode of life, freedom from nervous shocks, regular habits, especially of sleeping hours. The continual pounding on brick and stone streets, as the city dweller travels around town in the course of each day, is a tremendous source of nerve irritation spared his country cousin. It is said that business men and women take at least ten-thousand steps daily on hard surfaces. The shock of each step is registered upon the nervous system, and reacts on the terminal nerves.

Although the hair itself contains no blood vessels or nerves, it is richly supplied with both through the hair follicles. Whatever affects the nervous system and the general circulation affects the hair.

It is much easier to prevent than to overcome both baldness and graying hair. Given a loose scalp—one which may be moved freely over the cranium—a generous blood supply, and a stable nervous system, it must follow that the hair will retain its growth and natural color into old age, providing it is kept free from dandruff.

It is a singular thing that persons suffering from scalp troubles rarely consult a physician, and only in remote instances will they visit a skin specialist. Many persons go through

adult life with contagious scalp diseases resulting in loss of hair and baldness to which they resign themselves. Now when the oil glands of the scalp are diseased, only the most painstaking treatment will save the hair, for oily, scurfy dandruff eventuates most frequently in baldness. Indeed, threatened baldness from any cause requires the utmost cleanliness, through daily shampooing and tonic treatment, to combat and to overcome the trouble.

The hair is continually dying and new hair is continually growing, but there is a condition of *falling hair* caused by an unhealthy scalp, or by a "run-down" system, or both, which shows itself in a distinct *daily loss of hair*. Since the hair takes its nourishment from the blood—like every other tissue in the body—and requires particularly iron and other mineral substances for its beautiful growth, it is reasonable that we must *feed* the hair with special foods containing these minerals when it requires treatment. Here the iron-tonic food in powder form referred to in previous articles is advised, as well as a diet rich in iron.

It is a scientific fact that a sudden shock to the nervous system will cause blanching of the hair. There are some historical cases in which the hair turned white overnight, but regained its former color when the effect of the shock wore off. The emotions play a very prominent rôle upon the conduct of the hair.

Baldness, falling and graying hair may follow severe illnesses. This has been especially noticed after the recent epidemics of influenza, but if internal measures are combined with studiously regulated scalp treatment, the hair can be restored in nine cases out of ten and even the tenth case can be benefited if the hair follicles have not been completely destroyed.

All hair which indicates scalp trouble is benefited by local applications con-

taining sulphur. This mineral, sulphur, is a recognized agent in dandruff, and in combination with other ingredients sometimes gives quite satisfactory results.

Prematurely gray hair is often benefited by applications of sage tea. Place two ounces of green and two ounces of dry sage tea in an iron kettle containing three quarts of boiling water. Let it simmer until reduced to three pints; let this stand covered for twenty-four hours; strain and apply to the hair with a brush. Sage tea must not be confounded with the sage hair restorer, the making of which is no easy matter. Formula and information on this will be given privately.

The commercial, as well as social, value of beautifully preserved, natural-colored hair cannot be overestimated, but dyes which contain chemicals such as lead and other harmful substances should never be employed in an effort to color the hair. They not only destroy the hair, but affect the general health. Walnut shells enter into a harmless hair dye as follows:

Walnut shells, green or fresh....	3 ounces
Alum, powdered	3 drams
Olive oil	16 ounces
Oil of rose	15 drops
Oil of bergamot	25 drops

Beat the walnut shells in a mortar with the alum, then heat until all moisture has dissipated; filter, allow to cool, and add the aromatic oils. If this is applied daily with a brush, the hair will acquire a dark-brown tint.

Nothing short of a dye will affect white hair. White hair is not dead hair, as so many suppose; it is simply free from all coloring matter. If the possessors of white hair realized its beauty value, their efforts would not be directed to a fruitless search for a color remedy or a harmless dye, but to the exquisite care whereby all its beauty and charm could be used as an asset. Perfectly kept and becomingly coiffed white hair

is conceded a striking feature and one well worth spending time and thought upon.

To be beautiful, white hair should be scrupulously clean always; the least grease and dust destroys its luster. Care must be exercised in the character of a shampoo: no alkalis, no dark substances, such as tar, green soap, and so forth. A suds of pure castile soap is best, and the occasional use of eggs. An elaborate shampoo for white hair consists of:

Whites of three eggs	
Borax	2 drams
Glycerine	2 drams
Bay rum	4 ounces
Water	4 ounces

The yolks are rubbed into the scalp first, and then this shampoo, which has been previously mixed as follows: the egg white is beaten to a froth and mixed with part of the water, the borax is dissolved in the remaining water, all the ingredients are then mixed together and strained.

This method also applies to beautiful gray hair which one has no desire to color. Both white and gray hair are improved if, after the shampoo and repeated rinsings, French blue is added to the last rinsing water. This imparts to the hair a beautiful translucency.

Of equal importance to women is the mode of hair dress. White and gray hair are more becoming when worn in soft undulations around the face, à la Pompadour. Slightly parted at one side is additionally becoming to some faces. Many women are not capable of studying their good points and of hiding their defects by means of a becoming coiffure, and so it pays to get the best ideas from recognized specialists in these lines. One has but to view a large audience anywhere to observe the utter lack of taste, neatness, and cleanliness displayed by the majority of girls and women in the treatment of the hair. Why is there so manifest a lack of real

appreciation on the part of women on the subject of the hair?

It has been said in this department before, and it bears endless repetition, that the hair is subjected to greater indignities than any other feature, and this is the more regrettable, because no feature of face or form contains such possibilities for transforming the countenance into greater comeliness than does the hair. Furthermore, nowhere upon the person are personal attributes as to cleanly habits, as to taste, to innate refinement put into such evidence as in the care and in the dressing of the hair.

Formulae have been purposely omitted, because readers are invited to address me personally upon their hair needs; a tonic wash that is indicated in light hair, for instance, will not prove of benefit to auburn hair. But all readers are enjoined to cleanse the scalp daily with scrupulously clean brushes, and weekly with such a shampoo as each individual case calls for. Cleanliness of the scalp and neatness in "style" of coiffure are in themselves truly beautiful.

The name of the iron tonic in powder form, a list of iron foods, and a cure for dandruff and falling hair will gladly be furnished our readers on personal application.

What Readers Ask

MRS. E. M. D.—For local fat I like best a preparation that is made by a woman specialist. I cannot give further data except in a personal letter. Write me, inclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope for reply.

JESS B.—There are various forms of dandruff. Which form is yours—moist, dry, oily, or scaly? I will gladly help you when I hear from you again.

GRETCHEN.—Your trouble is quite common. Many girls suffer from similar weakness, principally because they *will* wear high heels. If you want a remedy, address me for private reply, as I cannot oblige you through this column, much as it would please me to do so.

ROSE M.—You can make your own lip and nail pomade, using the following formula

from the "Pharmaceutical Era": Eosin, ten parts; spermaceti, thirty parts; white wax, thirty parts; vaseline, four hundred and ten parts. This pomade is commonly called "Rosaline."

WORRIED READER.—Yes, peroxide of hydrogen and ammonia in equal parts bleach superfluous hair and in some instances destroy it. It is harmless, but there is the possibility that the hair may return heavier and coarser than before. I prefer different treatment for superfluous hair, and will gladly give you full information upon receipt of a request, with a self-addressed, stamped envelope inclosed for reply.

TILLIE B.—There is hope of stimulating the shrunken tissues so long as the glands have not been destroyed. We have a wonderful new preparation at our disposal now. By its means nursing mothers can insure a good flow of milk for baby, young women with no breast development can stimulate the glands into active growth. I will tell you about this if you write me privately.

MRS. CHARLES J.—Alum is frequently employed to prevent sagging and drooping tissues. Here is an astringent wash much used for this purpose: Cologne, one-half ounce; elderflower water, six ounces; powdered alum, twenty grains.

YOUNG MOTHER.—Under no circumstances wean the baby because you have not enough milk. There is a remarkable preparation at your command, which will stimulate your glands. Please let me write you about it. This may be the means of saving your baby's life, for breast babies escape many conditions to which artificially fed children succumb.

JANICE V.—Send to me direct for an ointment for bust reduction. Full directions accompany it.

LUCY MOORE.—No, it does not follow that you will lose the superabundant bust with age. I have seen quite old ladies with very conspicuous bust development. By all means treat the parts. The condition is a positive malformation, or in some cases of extreme overdevelopment. There are several methods of reduction and these I will tell you about upon receipt of a request with self-addressed, stamped envelope.

FRANCIS G.—The tendency of scars is to contract, and in doing so they may press upon some inclosed nerve fiber and so cause intense pain. This is the explanation of the pain so often suffered in an amputated limb. The only treatment is surgical and electrical.

In your case the scar tissue can be operated upon by a skillful surgeon and the nerve fiber released, while at the same time the present scar can be entirely obliterated. Yes, the scars and pits following a severe case of acne can be cured. In many instances I have seen every blemish removed, and a beautiful, smooth skin replacing the old. The treatment is expensive, but worth while if you can afford it.

SUSAN B.—I cannot give you the information you request, as I am opposed to hair dyes. I will, however, give you full information about the gray-hair restorer, if you will write to me for it.

M. M. M.—I am not surprised that the bleaches fail to help brown spots of so many years' standing. You require, first, a liver and intestinal tonic laxative and, second, a special cream for the removal of these spots.

COLD-BLOODED.—Heat is produced by the chemical action going on in the tissues, especially in the muscular and glandular tissues. There is a heat center in the brain which regulates this. The skin also has something to do with it. I find that the iron-tonic food, which I have so frequently mentioned, is a sovereign remedy for overcoming lack of heat in the system. Only the other day I learned of a gentleman who had been unable to use cold water upon his skin for years, but who now, after taking this preparation, enjoys cold baths. Why not try it? I will gladly put you in touch with the remedy.

THANK YOU.—A good finger-nail bleach consists of: Oxalic acid, 1 dram; rose water, two ounces. Apply to the discolored nails with friction by means of soft leather or flannel. Citric or acetic acid may be substituted for the oxalic acid. I hope you saw the article in the February number, "Concerning the Nails."

MRS. J. B.—C. R.—AND OTHERS.—How often must we tell our friends outside of the States that stamps from their country are not usable here any more than U. S. stamps will bring their letters to us? I am eager to answer all letters, but the simple rule of this department must be adhered to. If you cannot get a U. S. stamp, send U. S. currency or a ten-cent money order.

HERMAN S.—A good tonic for overcoming greasy dandruff consists of: Resorcin, forty grains; water, one-half ounce; witch-hazel, one ounce; alcohol, one ounce. Rub into the scalp thoroughly every night.

Doctor Whitney will be glad to answer, free of charge, all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health. Private replies will be sent to those inclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Do not send Canadian stamps or coins. Address: Beauty Department, SMITH'S MAGAZINE, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York.







Let No Corn Spoil one happy hour

ANY corn ache nowadays is unfair to yourself.

You can stop it by a touch. You can end the whole corn in short order.

The way is Blue-jay—either *liquid or plaster*. One moment applies it, the next moment forgets it.

The pain stops. Then the corn soon loosens and comes out.

Blue-jay has done that to not less than 20 million corns.

It does it in the right, the gentle, the scientific way. Harsh treatments are unnecessary now. It is vouched for by this great laboratory, famous the world over.

If you use wrong methods, cease them. If you pare corns, quit. There is now an ideal corn ender. It is saving millions of painful hours.

Ask your druggist for Blue-jay. Apply it tonight. It will end your dread of corns.

Plaster or Liquid

Blue-jay

The Scientific Corn Ender

BAUER & BLACK Chicago New York Toronto
Makers of B & B Sterile Surgical Dressings and Allied Products

The Public Knows Little of What Goes on Behind the Screen

SHE had married him before he became famous. And now the world hailed him as one of its greatest motion-picture actors. Until to-night she had always felt confident of his loyalty despite the ardor with which he made love, in front of the camera, to another woman.

But to-night gossiping women had told her of seeing Beresford *at* as well as *in* the movies with this other girl, and of seeing him at dinner with her afterward. He had told her he would be busy at the studio all evening. And the clock had struck two before she heard him entering the house.

For the first time during their married life, she began to be tortured with doubts and misgivings.

Let the wife herself tell the story in her own frank words. Many women have thought that "it must be fine to be a movie star's wife!" This one reveals the naked truth with startling candor—not only the story of her own and her celebrated husband's life, but of many other noted members of the actor colony with whom she and her husband still come in constant contact. The curtain is boldly drawn aside in:

The Revelations of a Star's Wife

BEGINNING IN THE MAY ISSUE OF

PICTURE-PLAY MAGAZINE

PRICE, 25 CENTS
AT ALL NEWS STANDS

May Issue on Sale April 1

STREET & SMITH CORPORATION, Publishers
79 Seventh Ave., New York City



WHICH STAR'S
WIFE WROTE IT?

This question will be on thousands of tongues next month. Perhaps you will guess. At least you will recognize in all probability, some of the famous characters discussed in her remarkable story.

Needless repairing! Every week the lady of the house has to spend some of her time sewing on buttons and repairing buttonholes that have been damaged in the laundry. In families where the Hatch One Button Union Suit is worn, all this trouble is saved, in so far as the underwear is concerned. There's only one button, seldom in need of attention, instead of a whole row to look after.



CHANGING TO SPRING UNDERWEAR

WHEN you change from winter underwear to the lighter weights this spring, you are doing it for the sake of comfort. Why not be sure of comfort in *fit* as well as weight?

There is just one union suit that will give you this perfect comfort. It is the union suit with just *one* button—the

HATCH

ONE BUTTON UNION SUIT

Because it eliminates the useless row of buttons up and down the front, which pull the edges and wrinkle the surface, it lets your body enjoy the full benefit of the garment's skilful fashioning.

FULD & HATCH KNITTING CO.
ALBANY NEW YORK




This Spring you can get the Hatch One Button Union Suit in the finest of knit goods and nainsook. We shall be glad to send, free on request, a catalog describing the complete line.

The Hatch One Button Union Suit is featured at the best stores everywhere, but if you cannot get it easily and quickly, send your size with remittance to our mill at Albany, N. Y., and you will be supplied direct, delivery free.

Men's garments: Knitted—\$1.50, 2.00, 2.50 and 3.00. Nainsook—\$1.00, 1.50, 1.75, 2.00 and 2.50.

Boys' garments: { Knitted—\$1.25
Nainsook—75 cents



Get the Drop on that Cough

Why cough? There's sure pleasant relief 'round the corner at your nearest dealer's.

Deans, the first menthol cough drops, have just the necessary menthol to make breathing easy—stop irritation instantly. Effective and very pleasant.

There is no ingredient so generally used by nose and throat specialists as menthol. Deans are as carefully compounded as a prescription.

DEANS

MENTHOLATED

COUGH DROPS



Why Have Gray Hair?

When Science Will Restore It In 4 to 8 Days

Everyone, man or woman, afflicted with ugly gray hair, should carefully fill out and mail this coupon. It brings a free sample of MARY T. GOLDMAN'S HAIR COLOR RESTORER, a clear, colorless dainty liquid as clear as water. Test as directed on one lock of hair with the special comb. Watch the gray vanish! In 4 to 8 days the natural color returns!

Then, don't wait. Get a full sized bottle from your druggist or direct from us. Be sure to see the famous name MARY T. GOLDMAN. Don't accept imitations—there is nothing "just as good."

Mary T. Goldman, 159 Goldman Bldg., St. Paul, Minn.

Mary T. Goldman, 159 Goldman Bldg., St. Paul, Minn.

Please send me your FREE trial bottle of Mary T. Goldman's Hair Color Restorer with special comb. I am not obligated in any way by accepting this free offer.

The natural color of my hair is
 black..... jet black..... dark brown.....
 medium brown..... light brown.....

Name
 Street
 Town
 Co. State

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements

No Money Down

10 Days' Trial

Elgin Watch



New, thin model Elgin watch, warranted movement in gold-filled case. 50-year guarantee.

Decide for yourself. If you keep it, this beautiful high class watch may be paid for at less than 7 cents a day.

Chain and Knife FREE

A gold filled knife and chain, absolutely free with this offer. State if you wish a Wadsworth chain or a Dickens or vest chain.

Less Than 7c a Day

If you are pleased when the watch comes in and only \$6.96 as first payment. Then wear the watch for ten full days. If you do not consider it the greatest value in America, return it at our expense and your deposit will be refunded immediately. If you decide to buy, send \$2.25 a month until \$4.96 is paid.

Remember, you are not obligated to buy when you order on trial. Just send your name and address. No red tape or annoyances. State which chain you wish. This offer limited. Act now. Send your name today.

Our 125-page catalog shows more than 8000 bargains in Diamonds, Watches and Jewelry. Write for it now.

J. M. LYON & CO., Dept. 1 Mailing List, 1924 New York, N.Y.

Write the Words for a Song!

Write the words for a song. We revise song poems, compose music for them, and guarantee a secure publication on a royalty basis by a New York music publisher. Our Lyric Editor and Chief Composer is a song-writer of national reputation and has written many big song-hits. Millions of copies of his songs have been sold. Mail your song-poems of love, peace, victory or any other subject to us every day. Poems submitted are examined free.

BROADWAY COMPOSING STUDIO

234 Fitzgerald Building

Broadway at Times Sq. New York, N.Y.

BUSH Car FREE



Get BIG PRIZE OFFER and BUSH Auto Answer Write today—Send your name and address. Write plainly and quickly. Don't wait. Dept. BUSH Bush Motor Co. Rush Temple, Chicago

Ladies Let Cuticura Keep Your Skin Fresh and Young

Soap, Ointment, Talcum, Etc. everywhere. For example address: Cuticura Laboratories, Dept. D, Malden, Mass.



Send coupon
for free
trial tube

We Asked 1,000 Men

"What is your conception of the ideal shaving cream?"

By V. K. Cassady, B. S., M. S., Chief Chemist

For many years we have been making the ideal toilet soap. We blended palm and olive oils—the balmy cosmetics of age-old fame. And millions of people have adopted this Palmolive Soap.

Six years ago we started to embody this blend in a shaving cream. And the first step was to ask a thousand men the virtues they wanted in it.

These were their requirements:

First, a quick shave



Acts in one
minute

Nine-tenths of those men wanted quick shaves, above all. They did not like long brushing, finger rubbing, hot towels and delay.

So we made a cream which acts in one minute.

Within that time the average beard absorbs 15% of water. And that is enough. This result is due to almost instant oil removal—the oil that coats the beard.

Next, liberal lather



Multiplies itself
250 times

Next, they wanted liberal lather. And they wanted a little of the soap to go far.

So we developed a cream which multiplies itself 250 times in lather. A bit on the brush

—only one-half gram—suffices for a shave. A single tube of Palmolive Shaving Cream serves for 152 shaves.

Lather that remains



Maintains itself
10 minutes

Then they wanted a lather which maintains itself without drying on the face.

So we perfected a lather which maintains its creamy fullness for ten minutes. That is ample time. This lather does not need replacement.

A soothing soap



Leaves the face
soft and smooth

They wanted a soothing shaving cream. They wanted a lubricated razor, no irritation, a pleasant after-effect.

The best way ever known to those ends is our blend of palm and olive oils. The lather is a lotion in itself.

We made 130 creams

We are experts in soap making. But it took us 18 months to attain this ideal shaving cream. We made up and tested 130 formulas. Thus step by step we attained these supremacies, and the best shaving cream in existence.

Now we ask you to test it. Learn in how many ways it excels. It will lead the way to a lifetime of delightful shaves.

Send the coupon for a trial tube.

PALMOLIVE

Shaving Cream

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements

10 Shaves FREE

Simply insert your name and address and mail to

Palmolive Company, Dept. 169
Milwaukee, U. S. A.

Genuine Aspirin

Take Tablets without Fear if you see the "Bayer Cross"

For Headache
Pain, Colds
Neuralgia
Toothache
Earache
Lumbago
Rheumatism



Insist upon a
"Bayer package,"
which contains
safe, proper
Directions.
Proved safe by
millions.

Bayer-Tablets of Aspirin

"Bayer" introduced Aspirin to physicians 20 years ago.

Handy tin boxes of 12 tablets cost but a few cents—Larger packages.
Aspirin is the trade mark of Bayer Manufacture of Monoaceticacidester of Salicylicacid

A Lizinite Is Yours for the Asking

No. 3 No. 5

Keep It 10 Days Free
Wear a LIZINITE GEM RING and be the envy of your friends. See if you can tell it from a high priced diamond. Send your Name, Address and Number of Ring you select and one of these wonderful LIZINITE GEM RINGS with all the fire and sparkle of the finest diamond will be sent you by return mail.

Solid Gold Mountings
All our rings are hand engraved, set with full carat weight LIZINITE GEM. Select the one you like best:

No. 1—\$21.50	2—\$17.50	3—\$15.50
No. 4—15.50	6—12.50	

Sizes must be included when ordering.
When your LIZINITE GEM RING comes, pay the mail man \$4.50, balance \$10.00 monthly until paid. Money back any time within 10 days if not perfectly satisfied.
Get a Lizinite Gem Ring Today
THE LIZINITE GEM COMPANY
"The House of Quality and Price"
Dept. 630—128 N. Wells St., Chicago, Ill.

No. 4 No. 2 No. 1

\$17.50 ALL SUIT WOOL SUIT

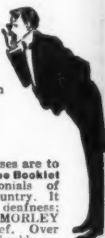
Made to your measure, payable after received.
Perfect fit, fine goods and tailoring, \$20 saving, all guaranteed or no pay. **SAMPLES FREE.** Every man should write at once for our beautiful free book of cloth samples and correct fashions, explaining everything. Write letter or postal; just say, "Send me your samples," and get everything by return mail. Important to every man. Write today sure.

PARK TAILORING COMPANY
Dept. D1152, CHICAGO, ILL.

"DON'T SHOUT"



"I can hear you with the MORLEY PHONE." It is invisible, weightless, comfortable, inexpensive. No metal, wires nor rubber. Can be used by anyone, young or old. The Morley Phone for the



DEAF

is to the ears what glasses are to the eyes. Write for Free Booklet containing testimonials of users all over the country. It describes causes of deafness; tells how and why the MORLEY PHONE affords relief. Over one hundred thousand sold.

THE MORLEY CO., Dept. 758, 26 S. 15 St., Phila.

FREE



BANJO Ukulele Hawaiian Guitar, Violin, Mandolin, Guitar, Cornet, Tenor Banjo, Banjo, Ukulele

Wonderful new system of teaching note music by mail. To first pupils in each locality, we give a \$20 superb Violin, Mandolin, Ukulele, Guitar, Hawaiian Guitar, Cornet, Tenor Banjo or Banjo absolutely free. Very small charge for lessons only. We guarantee success or no charge. Complete outfit free. Write now. No obligation. **SLINGERLAND SCHOOL OF MUSIC, Inc., Dept. 610 CHICAGO, ILL.**

KILL THE HAIR ROOT

My method is the only way to prevent the hair from growing again. Easy, painless, harmless. No scars. Booklet free. Write today, enclosing 3 stamps. We teach Beauty Culture.

D. J. MAHLER, 864 PP Mahler Park, Providence, R. I.

2 PAIR \$2.69
For Only **2**



**Genuine Blue
DENIM
OVERALLS**

Just think! 2 pair of "Ironbilt" overalls for \$2.69. Another glaring example of the money you save by buying direct from us. Made of heavy fast color blue denim. Strong reinforced seams. Heavy pocket linings. Plenty of pockets all around. Cut large and roomy. Don't miss this remarkable value.

**SEND NO
MONEY**

Compare these with overalls sold at \$3 or more. Don't send a penny now. Pay postman only \$2.69 plus postage on arrival. Then examine these "Ironbilt" overalls. If not the most remarkable bargain ever heard of, return and get your money back promptly. Sizes in waist 30 to 54. Extra sizes in waist 46 to 54. 50 cents extra. Only two pairs to a customer at this price.

WAREWELL COMPANY
Dept. MO 1639, Philadelphia, Pa.



**PARKER'S
HAIR BALSAM**

Removes Dandruff—Stops Hair Falling
Restores Color and
Beauty to Gray and Faded Hair
Sells at 11.00 at drugists.
Hiscox Chem. Wks., Patchogue, N. Y.

HINDERCORNS Removes Corns, Callouses, etc., stops all pains, ensures comfort to the feet, makes walking easy. 15 cents by mail or at Drugists. Hiscox Chemical Works, Patchogue, N. Y.

NO MONEY DOWN



**FREE TRIAL
FOR 10 DAYS**

You assume no obligation by accepting our invitation to wear a Hexnite Gem for 10 days. Send your name and address. The ring you select will be shipped for your approval, charges prepaid. Upon arrival, deposit only \$4.50 with the postman and then wear the gem for 10 full days. If you can tell it from a diamond, send it back and your money will be refunded. Either satisfaction or no sale. If you decide to buy, send only \$3.00 monthly until the amount of \$18.50 is paid. The price is the same for any of the 8 rings shown. The mountings are solid gold and are set with guaranteed Hexnite Gems weighing about 1 carat. Decide on the ring you want. Order by number and do not forget to state the finger size. Send TODAY for our 32 page catalog illustrating hundreds of bargains. Write to Dept. 604—
The Hexnite Co., 116 Nassau St., New York, N. Y.



**This Man
Wouldn't Stay Down**

He was putting in long hours at unskilled work. His small pay scarcely lasted from week to week.

He saw other men promoted. Then he learned the reason. They had special training. He made up his mind to get that kind of training.

He sent to Scranton a coupon like the one below. That was his first step upward.

The reward was not long in coming—an increase in salary. Then he was made Foreman. Now he is Superintendent.

It just shows what a man with ambition can do!

What about you? You don't have to stay down. You can climb to the position you want in the work you like best. The way to do that is easy—without obligating yourself in any way, mark and mail this coupon.

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS
BOX 3457-B SCRANTON, PA.

Explain, without obligating me, how I can qualify for the position, or in the subject, before which I mark X.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ELECTRICAL ENGINEER | <input type="checkbox"/> BOOKKEEPER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Lighting and Railways | <input type="checkbox"/> Stenographer and Typist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Wiring | <input type="checkbox"/> Private Secretary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone Work | <input type="checkbox"/> Business Correspondent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MECHANICAL ENGINEER | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical Draftsman | <input type="checkbox"/> Cert. Public Accountant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Machine Shop Practice | <input type="checkbox"/> Railway Accountant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toolmaker | <input type="checkbox"/> WINDOW TRIMMER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gas Engine Operating | <input type="checkbox"/> SHOW CARD and Sign Ptg. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CIVIL ENGINEER | <input type="checkbox"/> SALESMANSHIP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Surveying and Mapping | <input type="checkbox"/> CIVIL SERVICE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MINE FOREMAN OR ENGINEER | <input type="checkbox"/> Railway Mail Clerk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STATIONARY ENGINEER | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marine Engineer | <input type="checkbox"/> Poultry Raising |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ship Draftsman | <input type="checkbox"/> Railroad Position |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECT | <input type="checkbox"/> BUSINESS MANAGEMENT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contractor and Builder | <input type="checkbox"/> TRAFFIC MANAGER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architectural Draftsman | <input type="checkbox"/> AUTOMOBILES |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete Builder | <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD ENGLISH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Structural Engineer | <input type="checkbox"/> Common School Subjects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PLUMBING and HEATING | <input type="checkbox"/> ILLUSTRATING |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sheet Metal Worker | <input type="checkbox"/> Cartooning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Textile Overseer or Supt. | <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CHEMIST | <input type="checkbox"/> Navigation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy | <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish Teacher |

Name _____ Business _____
Present _____ Address _____
Occupation _____
Street and No. _____
City _____ State _____

Canadians may send this coupon to the International Correspondence Schools Canadian, Ltd., Montreal, Canada

\$2.98 For This Stunning Susquehanna Silk Poplin Skirt

Here is an amazing value. Think of it! A wonderful GEN- UINE Susquehanna SILK POP- LIN skirt of most becoming style for only \$2.98. DIRECT TO YOU at wholesale price. Compare with skirts offered for \$8 elsewhere. Only one to a customer during this introductory sale. Notice the remark- able high lustrous. Two chic novel- elty pockets of self material. lined and trimmed with silky tassels and silky buttons. Skirt gracefully set off with self belt and gather- ed all around under waist. Cut roomy and full. Made of wonderful genuine Susque- hanna SILK which con- tains a percentage of cotton for dura- bility's sake.

SEND NO MONEY

Just pay postman \$2.98 plus post- age, then see and try on this skirt. If not delighted in every way, your money will be returned in full at once. Colors: Black, Navy Blue or Taupe Gray. Sizes 22 inch to 40 inch waist; 34 inch to 40 inch length. Extra waist sizes 32 to 40-- 35c. extra. State size and color. Or- der by number SP 1543. Send no money but write now.



WAREWELL COMPANY
Dept. SP 1543, Philadelphia, Pa.

Auto Owners WANTED!



To introduce the best au- tomobile tires in the world. Made under our new and ex- clusive Internal Hydraulic Expansion Process that elimi- nates Blow-Out—Stone-Bruise— Rim Cut and enables us to sell our tires under a

10,000 MILE GUARANTEE

We want an agent in every community to use and intro- duce these wonderful tires at our astonishingly low prices to all motor car owners.

FREE TIRES for YOUR OWN CAR

to a representative in each community. Write for booklet fully describing this new process and explaining our amazing intro- ductory offer to owner agents.

Hydro-United Tire Co.
DEPT. 220 PHILADELPHIA, PA.

30 Days' Free Trial

Select from 44 Styles, colors and sizes, famous **Ranger** bicycles. De- livered free on approval, from maker-direct-to- rider, at **Factory Prices**. Save \$10 to \$25 on your bicycle.

12 Months to Pay Immediate pos- session on our liberal Easy Payment plan. Parents often advance first deposit. Energetic boys earn the small monthly payments thereafter.

TIRES Horns, wheels, lamps, parts and equipment at half usual prices. **SEND NO MONEY**—Ask for big free Ranger Catalog, marvelous prices and terms.

MEAD CYCLE COMPANY
Dept. F-4 Chicago, Ill.



Special offer to Rider Agents

ON CREDIT DIAMONDS WATCHES



SEND for CATALOG

Special Bargains

DIAMONDS WITH HEARTS
Diamond Engagement Rings;
Wedding Rings, plain and Diamond-Set

Also a splendid assortment of the new en- graved, pierced Rings, White and Green Solid Gold, fine brilliant Diamonds; Diamond La Vallieres, Bar Pins, Ear Screws, Scarf Pins, Cuff Links, Watches, Wrist Watches, etc. Send today for Catalog and make your selections.

We pay all shipping charges.

CREDIT TERMS on purchases of \$5 or over, one- fifth down, balance in eight equal amounts, payable monthly.

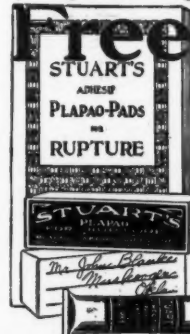
LOFTIS
BROS & CO. 1833

**LIBERTY BONDS
ACCEPTED**
THE NATIONAL CREDIT JEWELERS
Dept. M222 106 N. State Street, Chicago, Ill.
STORES IN LEADING CITIES



Loftis
Lady
Louise
Diamond
Ring

Stop Using a Truss



Yes, stop it, you know by your own experience it is only a make-shift, a false prop against a collapsing wall, and that it is undermining your health. Why, then, continue to wear it? Here is a better way, which means that tiresome, tortuous trusses can be thrown away forever, and it's all because Stuart's PLAPAO-PADS are different, being medicine applicators made self-adhesive pur- posely to prevent slip- ping and to afford an arrangement to hold the parts securely in place.

**NO STRAPS,
BUCKLES OR
SPRINGS
ATTACHED,**
cannot slip, so cannot chafe or press against the public bone.

Thousands have treated themselves in the privacy of the home, and report most obstinate cases cured—no delay from work. Soft as velvet—easy to apply—in- expensive. Process of recovery is natural, so afterwards no use for trusses. Awarded Gold Medal International Exposition, Rome; Grand Prix, Paris. Write us today to prove it by sending TRIAL PLAPAO, FREE. Address, **Fisap Laboratories, Block 27, St. Louis, Mo.**

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements

BUY TODAY

10 MONTHS TO PAY

7½% Yearly Increase Guaranteed

SPECIAL TERMS—Ten months credit on any article selected from the SWEET catalog. No money in advance. Shipment made for your examination. First payment to be made only after you have convinced yourself that SWEET values cannot be equalled. If not what you wish, return at our expense. Any diamond bought of us may be returned for exchange at an increased value of 7½% more than you paid.

No Red Tape—No Delay

Every transaction **CONFIDENTIAL**. You don't do justice to yourself and your dollars unless you inspect our unusual values in Diamonds, Watches, Jewelry, Silverware, Leather goods, etc. Send TODAY for SWEET Colored De Luxe Catalog. Write NOW to Dept. 181-J.

SPECIAL VALUE

ONLY \$5.00

Sweet's Cluster
7 Fine Diamonds, set in Platinum. Looks like 1½ carat Solitaire. Price, \$62.50.

"THE HOUSE OF QUALITY"
LW-SWEET INC.
1650-1660 BROADWAY, NEW YORK.

Dr. Lawton's Guaranteed FAT REDUCER

FOR MEN AND WOMEN

will show reduction taking place in 11 days or money refunded. The Reducer (not electrical) reduces unsightly parts promptly, reducing only where you wish to lose and the Lawton Method dissolves and eliminates superfluous fat from the system. Easily followed directions do not require exercises, starving, medicine or treatments; not only rids you of fat but improves appearance and general health, brings physical and mental vigor and enables you to regain and retain your normal weight. Dr. Lawton (shown in picture) reduced from 211 to 152 lbs. This reducer and genuine method have been the means whereby a great number of fat people throughout the United States and elsewhere have easily gotten rid of unhealthy, disfiguring fatty tissue without discomfort. Any stout man or woman can obtain these results whether 10 or 100 lbs. overweight, look better and feel better. The complete cost is \$5.00. Send for your reducer today. Remember it is guaranteed. Office hours 10-4 daily.



Dr. Thomas Lawton, 120 West 70th St., Dept. 188, New York



FREE DIAMOND RING OFFER

Just to advertise our famous Hawaiian im. diamonds—the greatest discovery the world has ever known. We will send absolutely free this 1½ ct. ring, set with a 1½ ct. Hawaiian im. diamond—in beautiful ring box postage paid. Pay postmaster \$1.00. U. S. charges to cover postage, boxing, advertising, handling, etc. If you can tell fit from a real diamond return and money refunded. Only 10,000 given away. Send no money. Answer quick. Send size of finger.

KRAUTH & REED, Dept. 412
MASONIC TEMPLE CHICAGO

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements

LEARN Advertising!

—by MAIL, in Spare Hours

ADVERTISING will advance you further in one year than a lifetime at irksome work. The man who knows advertising is in demand to sell the goods of others. He is better able to sell himself.

Face the facts

The big secret of success is the right start. How hard you work doesn't count—or even how much you know. It's what you learn that means most

The minute you graduate from Page-Davis your services have a marked value. You become master of yourself, master of your future. Your work then directly affects sales—profits, and is paid for accordingly.



P. W. LENNEN
Advertising
Manager, The
Royal Tailors

The most opportunities and by far the biggest pay

Advertising ability is the one line in which the supply has never yet equalled the demand. Advertising men and women were never so wanted as right now. That's why so many business houses ask our vocational department's help in filling advertising positions. Some of our graduates of four and five years back are drawing salaries most bank presidents would envy.



SAM C. DONES
Director of Ad-
vertising
Coca-Cola

We guarantee to teach you

Advertising is so interesting, it is easily and quickly learned. Our course covers every branch: National Publicity, Mail Order Advertising, Agency Work, Retail Store, and in addition the principles of modern business organization.

WRITE for this free book telling just what you have wanted to know about advertising. Photographs of nationally-known advertising men: examples of their work—in colors. Explains our course, terms, how to start. Inventigate this important-money field today.

Free-

U.S.
Coupon

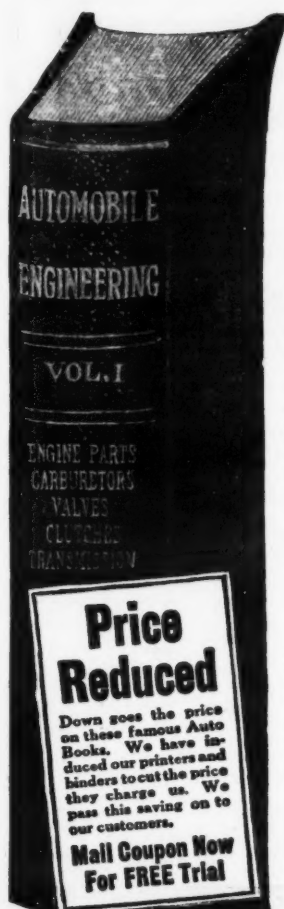


PAGE-DAVIS SCHOOL 1434 Page Building Chicago
(Established 25 Years)

Send free of charge, prepaid, your complete book on Advertising, fully explaining the Page-Davis course, and monthly payment plan.

Name

Address



Price Reduced

Down goes the price on these famous Auto Books. We have induced our printers and binders to cut the price they charge us. We pass this saving on to our customers.

Mail Coupon Now For FREE Trial

NAME	POSITION	SALARY
John	AUTOMOBILE ENGINEER	\$125 A WEEK
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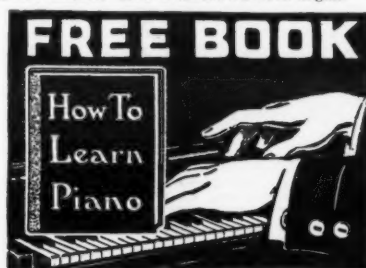
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THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, in its issue of October 9, tells the story. He was a retiring fellow—rarely ever asserted himself. Didn't have much to say. He blushed whenever a girl spoke to him.

But he did a lot of thinking and away back in his mind something whispered the old message "Knowledge is Power." So he began using his spare hours in studying the job above him. As he studied, he not only gained knowledge that enabled him to do his work better but his concentrative powers and his confidence increased.

One day the foreman didn't turn up. The superintendent and the general manager came into the shop discussing the foreman's sudden death. "Where will we find a man to take his place?"

And then like a flash, the modest young man realized the power he had been accumulating. With new-born confidence, he stepped before the bosses and explained that for two years he had been quietly preparing for a bigger job—that he could handle the foreman's work.

Said they together: "You are foreman!"

America everywhere needs men like this earnest young man—men of vision who see that what they put into their heads, through the study of practical subjects, is the best-paying investment, for it brings not only *more money* but *greater opportunity, larger responsibility, and bigger manhood.*

Many thousands of men in high positions today look back with satisfaction to a spare-hour course completed with the aid of earnest Y. M. C. A. instructors. Last year the Y. M. C. A. gave instruction to more than 107,000 men and boys who believed in such use of their spare hours. Today, with correspondence instruction added to their day and evening classes, the Y. M. C. A. Schools are teaching more men than ever before. The list below suggests a few of the 180 courses now offered—something for every ambitious man.

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"Whist," says I, "if the government hears you they'll be passin' a 19th amendment to stop cussin'. Come with me and I'll show you a clever little article that will take hold of that soft collar of yours and hold it up as neat and tidy as a stiff one and let you keep all the comfort that you're so set on."

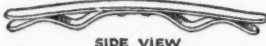
"It's lyin' you are," says Sam, "But I'll have a look at it anyway."

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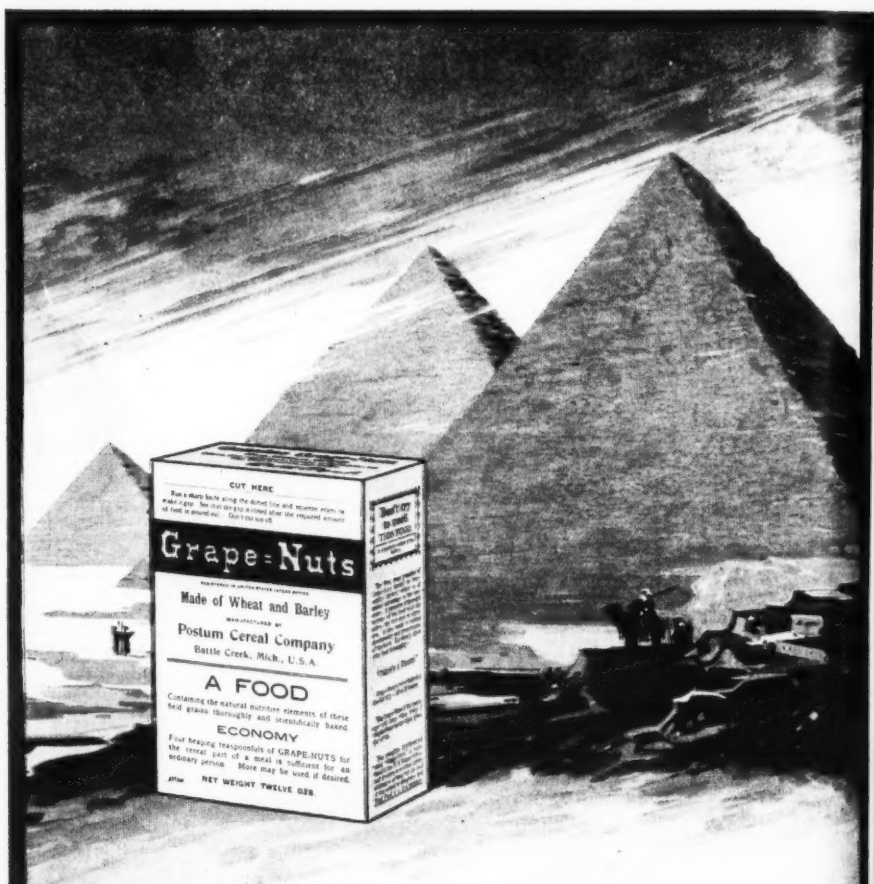


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